

**Victorian Game Management Authority**

# **Stakeholder sentiment research 2021**

**FINAL**

**29 September 2021**

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# I. Executive summary

## Background

The GMA commissioned ORIMA Research to conduct stakeholder sentiment research to measure levels of awareness and understanding of the GMA and its role amongst key stakeholder groups, as well as to gain insights into perceptions and attitudes towards the GMA and its performance.

The primary objectives of the research were to understand stakeholder perceptions of the GMA's role and its performance against key performance indicators, identify issues related to the productivity and effectiveness of GMA's relationships with its stakeholders and establish a baseline measure of stakeholder satisfaction to allow tracking over time.

## Awareness and understanding of the GMA's role

Understanding of GMA's role was found to be generally high across the three groups with partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting demonstrating higher understanding than game licence holders and peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting.

Across all groups, understanding was lowest in relation to whether the GMA's role includes '*promoting hunting of game species*'. Follow-up qualitative research found that this was commonly because they assumed promoting hunting would logically fall under GMA's remit due to its role of managing game hunting and its name. Many peak bodies/ associations that were involved in hunting also commented that they felt GMA should be promoting hunting as part of its role.

## Engagement with the GMA (partners and peak bodies/ associations)

Nearly all partners and peak bodies/ associations had engaged directly with the GMA in the past 12 months. Of these stakeholders, all partner agencies were satisfied with how the GMA engaged with their organisation, whereas only around half of peak bodies/ associations rated their engagement positively. Satisfaction was significantly lower among those peak bodies/ associations that were opposed to hunting.

Partner agencies provided positive ratings across nearly all aspects of engagement and this was also reflected in the primarily positive qualitative feedback. An opportunity for improvement identified in both the quantitative and qualitative feedback provided from partner agencies was improving the clarity/ delineation of responsibilities between the GMA and their organisation.

Respondents from peak bodies/ associations were most likely to agree GMA staff communicated with them effectively and engaged with them professionally and least likely to agree the GMA provided sufficient information to their organisation and were committed to finding solutions to problems. Most participants in the qualitative research provided suggestions related to improving communication and consultation with stakeholders.

## Engagement with the GMA (game licence holders)

The vast majority of game licence holders had used at least one of GMA's services in the last 12 months, most commonly reporting having renewed their licence. Engagement was highest among those licensed for both deer and game birds, and lowest among those who were only licensed for game birds. Perceptions of engagement among those who had used the GMA's services were generally positive, particularly in relation to the GMA addressing their request/ submission in a timely manner.

Just over one fifth of game licence holders reported that they had received an invitation to provide feedback from the GMA in the past 12 months. Of these, the vast majority responded to the request and rated aspects of the feedback process positively. Perceptions of the feedback process were most positive among those licensed for deer only.

Only a small minority (less than one tenth) of game licence holders reported having interacted with GMA game officers in the field in the past 12 months. Interaction was particularly lower among those licensed for deer only. Perceptions of the game officers among those who interacted with them in the field were moderately positive overall, with those licensed for both deer and game birds providing the most positive ratings, particularly compared to those only licensed for game birds.

## Compliance activities

Partner agencies held the most positive perceptions of the GMA's compliance operations, with nearly all of them rating GMA's effectiveness in undertaking a coordinated approach to compliance operations at least 'moderately' effective. In contrast, only around half of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA's compliance operations were effective and perceptions were significantly less favourable among those opposed to hunting. Perceptions of effectiveness among game licence holders were also relatively unfavourable, with less than half agreeing that the GMA is adequately addressing illegal hunting and breaches to public safety laws related to hunting. The most common suggestion/ feedback provided by game licence holders in relation to GMA's compliance activities was to increase the presence of GMA in the field.

In line with perceived effectiveness of compliance activities, partner agencies were the most likely to report the GMA's performance had improved in its presence in the field and deterring illegal activity in the last four years, followed by peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders. However, a small proportion of game licence holders felt GMA's presence in the field and deterring illegal activity had declined.

## Advice and research

Perceptions of the GMA's advice and research was largely positive among partner agencies, while peak bodies/ associations generally reported negative perceptions. Most partner agencies felt the GMA was effective at managing game seasons in line with scientific evidence and had a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues. In contrast,

under a quarter of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA was effective at managing game seasons in line with scientific evidence.

While the majority of partner agencies felt that the GMA was neutral and unbiased, less than half of peak bodies/ associations and around one third of game licence holders agreed. Perceptions were least favourable among peak bodies/ associations that were opposed to hunting, with none of them agreeing that GMA was neutral and unbiased. Qualitative research indicated this was due to them perceiving that the GMA was making decisions in favour of hunters.

## Education resources

Usage of GMA's education resources was highest among peak bodies/ associations, with nearly all reporting having accessed at least one type in the past 12 months. Whilst not as common as among peak bodies/ associations, most game licence holders also reported accessing at least one type of GMA's education resources. The vast majority of respondents accessed the GMA's education resources through the GMA website.

Respondents generally held positive perceptions of GMA's education resources, particularly in relation to their helpfulness/usefulness and accuracy. Respondents were least likely to agree that the information presented was objective, fair and balanced.

The vast majority of partner agencies generally had positive perceptions of the GMA's effectiveness in providing quality education to game hunters, whereas only a small proportion of peak bodies/ associations perceived GMA to be effective in this respect. Most partner agencies also considered that the quality and ease of understanding the GMA's licensing and education materials had improved in the last four years, whereas peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders were more likely to report that these had remained the same.

## Impact of GMA's work

Perceptions of the impact of GMA's work varied considerably, with partner agencies generally positive on the GMA's impact in improving sustainable, lawful and responsible hunting practices and peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders commonly providing negative ratings.

Nearly all partner agencies felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving sustainable hunting practices in the past 12 months. In contrast, less than half of peak bodies/ associations and just over half of game licence holders rated the GMA's effectiveness in these activities as at least 'moderate'. Organisations involved in hunting provided much more positive ratings than those opposed to hunting.

The majority of game licence holders agreed that GMA's services assist them to be lawful and responsible hunters. Those only licensed for deer reported more positive perceptions across

all aspects related to GMA's impact in improving sustainable, lawful and responsible hunting practices, compared to those licensed for game birds only or for both game birds and deer.

## Conclusion

The research found that there were clear differences among stakeholder groups in their perceptions of engagement with the GMA and the GMA's performance. Overall, government partner agencies reported the most positive perceptions of the GMA, followed by peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting. Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting reported the least positive perceptions of the GMA.

Opportunities for improving engagement with partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations (as suggested by respondents from these groups) primarily related to communication and consultation. To improve working relationships with these stakeholders, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve the accuracy/ credibility of data it uses and shares;
- ◆ Improve transparency in relation to sharing of information and providing evidence/ rationale of why decisions have been made;
- ◆ Increase proactive communication about key issues, the activities the GMA is undertaking to promote sustainable and lawful hunting practices, and the impacts of these activities; and
- ◆ Offer better opportunities for genuine consultation with stakeholders in relation to key decisions.

Game licence holders reported broadly positive perceptions of the GMA overall. Among game licence holders, those only licensed to hunt deer tended to provide more positive ratings compared to those licensed to hunt game birds. Opportunities for improvement for game licence holders primarily related to increasing engagement with the GMA's resources and the helpfulness/ ease of accessing its resources. To increase game licence holders' engagement with its resources, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Better engage with game licence holders who are not part of hunting associations/ clubs; and
- ◆ Improve game licence holders' understanding of its roles and responsibilities.

To improve game licence holders' perceptions of its services and resources, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve the usability of its website/ online services –acknowledging that many hunters are from an older demographic; and
- ◆ Ensure information provided is consistent across its website, printed materials and advice provided by GMA staff.

## II. Survey background and methodology

### Background

The Game Management Authority (GMA) is an independent statutory authority responsible for the regulation of game hunting in Victoria. It endeavours to improve and promote responsible hunting in Victoria through education, research and enforcement. The GMA is responsible for:

- ◆ issuing Game Licences;
- ◆ managing open and closed seasons for game species;
- ◆ enforcing game hunting laws and taking action against those who do not comply;
- ◆ educating hunters on how to hunt legally in Victoria; and
- ◆ providing recommendations to government on game management, and animal welfare related issues.

The GMA also plays a vital role in managing natural resources across Victoria through the sustainable harvest of game species, humane treatment of animals that are hunted or used in game hunting, and minimising any impacts on non-game wildlife, including the conservation of wildlife habitats.

The GMA works with a broad range of stakeholders, from individual game licence holders and hunting bodies to animal conservation organisations and government partner agencies. The GMA interacts with each of these stakeholders in variety of different ways, whether through professional collaboration and partnerships, communication, delivery of services and educational programs, or compliance and monitoring.

The GMA commissioned ORIMA Research to conduct stakeholder sentiment research to measure levels of awareness and understanding of the GMA and its role amongst key stakeholder groups, as well as to gain insights into perceptions and attitudes towards the GMA and its performance.

### Research objectives

The objectives of the research were to:

- ◆ understand stakeholder perceptions of the GMA's role and its performance against key performance indicators, and analyse how stakeholders' understanding of the role of the GMA may influence their perceptions of performance;
- ◆ identify any issues or risks to the productivity and effectiveness of the GMA's relationships with its stakeholders, as well as any areas to focus on that may assist in strengthening relationships and improving performance; and
- ◆ establish a baseline measure of stakeholder satisfaction to allow tracking over time.

## Research methodology

The research comprised two components:

- ◆ a quantitative online survey with all stakeholder groups (government partner agencies, peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders); and
- ◆ follow up in-depth interviews with government partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations.

### Online survey

#### *Sample design and sampling frame*

The sampling frame for the online survey comprised:

- ◆ **Government partner agencies** that engage with the GMA;
- ◆ **Peak bodies/ associations**, including hunting and animal welfare organisations; and
- ◆ **Game licence holders**, who held a Victorian game licence at the time of the survey.

GMA provided a list of stakeholders to invite to participate in the online survey.

**Table 1: Sample design and response rates**

Stakeholder group	Total invited	Total responses received	Response rate
Partner agencies	41	27	66%
Peak bodies/ associations	23	18	78%
Game licence holders	30,466	4,122	14%

#### *Questionnaire development*

Draft questionnaires for each stakeholder group were developed and refined in consultation with the GMA's project team. While the questionnaire for each group was broadly similar, there were some questions only asked of certain groups or worded differently between groups to reflect their interaction with the GMA. The survey questionnaires are provided in Appendix B.

#### *Fieldwork*

The online survey was conducted online from 4 to 27 August 2021.

All stakeholders received a primary approach email from the GMA, advising them of the survey and encouraging them to participate. This was followed by an invitation email from ORIMA, containing a unique link to access the survey. Reminder emails were sent during the fieldwork period to maximise response rates to the survey.

#### *Statistical Precision*

As the surveys were attempted censuses of all relevant stakeholders (the game licence holders' survey was conducted as a census of a sub-set of game licence holders - those for



whom email addresses were available), the survey results are not subject to sampling error. They are, however, subject to non-sampling measurement error.

Unlike sampling error, non-sampling error is generally not mathematically measurable. The main non-sampling error risk with this survey is the potential for non-response bias to affect results. Non-response bias arises if the people who respond to the survey differ systematically to non-respondents in terms of characteristics relevant to the survey.

The higher the response rate, the less likely it is that the results will be subject to non-response bias. High response rates were recorded for the partner agency surveys (66%) and the peak body/ association surveys (78%). It is therefore unlikely that there are significant non-response biases in the survey results for these cohorts.

The relatively low response rate for the game licence holders' survey (14%) means that there is a larger risk of material non-response bias in the results of this survey and hence the results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 2 below compares the population and survey response sample of licence holders by permit type. It shows that while the breakdown by licence type was similar, duck hunters were somewhat underrepresented in the sample. To improve the representativeness of the survey results, the game licence holders' survey data was weighted to align the response sample distributions in terms of permit type with those of the overall population of game licence holders.

**Table 2: Game licence holders population and sample comparison by permit type**

Permit type	Population		Survey sample	
	N=	%	n=	%
Deer (Stalking & Hounds)	2,997	4.90%	191	5.31%
Deer (Stalking & Hounds) & Game Birds including Duck	2,222	3.63%	207	5.75%
Deer (Stalking & Hounds) & Game Birds not including Duck	187	0.31%	8	0.22%
Deer Stalking	28,906	47.23%	2,012	55.94%
Deer (Stalking) & Game Birds including Duck	10,152	16.59%	697	19.38%
Deer (Stalking) & Game Birds not including Duck	3,474	5.68%	98	2.72%
Game Birds including Duck	12,158	19.87%	351	9.76%
Game Birds not including Duck	1,104	1.80%	33	0.92%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,200</b>		<b>3,567</b>	

Please note that n=526 respondents did not indicate which game species their licence was endorsed for. These respondents are not included in the table above and results for these respondents were not weighted (i.e. given a weight of '1').

## In-depth follow up interviews

### *Recruitment*

Follow up interviews were conducted with a total of 20 partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations. After completing the online survey, participants were contacted to participate in an in-depth follow up interview of up to 1 hour in duration. Table 3 below outlines the profile of participants. A full list of participants is provided in Appendix C.

**Table 3: Participants in the follow up interviews**

Stakeholder group	Total participants
Partner agencies	n=10
Peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting	n=7
Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting	n=3
Total	n=20

### *Discussion guide development*

A discussion guide for the follow-up interviews was developed and refined in consultation with the GMA's project team.

### *Fieldwork*

The follow up interviews were conducted from 17 August to 3 September 2021. All interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams or via telephone.

## Presentation of results

### **Understanding the quantitative research findings**

Reported percentages are based on the total number of valid responses made to the particular question being reported on. This occasionally differs from the total number of completed survey questionnaires because of omissions in the completed questionnaires. The results reflect the responses of people who had a view and for whom the questions were applicable. 'Don't know/ unsure' responses have only been presented where this aids in the interpretation of the results.

For ease of reading, the five-point scales have been condensed and are reported in the form of three-point scales—recording positive, neutral and negative responses. For example, the proportion of respondents who answered 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to a particular question are reported as the proportion who responded as 'agree,' while those who answered 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' are reported as the proportion who responded as 'disagree.' Percentage results throughout the report may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### *Calculation and interpretation of index scores*

For some sections of the survey, an aggregate performance index has been constructed. The aggregate index for an area is the average of individual question indices for questions in that section.

The index for a question is the mean (average) response for the question across respondents (using the numerical score from the 5-point response scale) transformed into a 0 to 100 point scale.

The aggregate indices have the following properties that assist in interpretation of the index score:

- ◆ index scores of 0–49 indicate that, on average, respondents have provided an unfavourable assessment of the GMA's performance;
- ◆ an index score of 50 indicates that, on average, respondents have provided a neutral assessment;
- ◆ index scores of 51–100 indicate that, on average, respondents have provided a favourable assessment;
- ◆ the higher the index score, the more positive is the average respondent's perception of the GMA's performance;
- ◆ if all respondents provided the most positive rating for all statements presented in the questions covering an area of performance, the index score would be 100; and
- ◆ if all respondents provided the most negative rating for all statements presented in the questions covering an area of performance, the index score would be 0.

### **Understanding the qualitative research findings**

Qualitative research findings have been used to provide depth of understanding on particular issues.

The following terms used in the report provide a qualitative indication of the number of qualitative research participants who held particular views:

- ◆ Most – refers to findings that relate to more than three quarters of the research participants;
- ◆ Many – refers to findings that relate to more than half of the research participants;
- ◆ Some – refers to findings that relate to around a third of the research participants; and
- ◆ A few – refers to findings that relate to less than a quarter of research participants.

Participant quotes have been provided throughout the report to support the main results or findings under discussion.

## Quality assurance

This project was conducted in accordance with the international quality standard ISO 20252, the international information security standard ISO 27001, as well as the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. ORIMA Research also adheres to the *Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021* administered by the Australian Data and Insights Association (ADIA).

### III. Stakeholder feedback measurement framework and results

A measurement framework was developed to assist the GMA to measure and report on stakeholder feedback in line with its key goals. The framework maps the GMA's overarching goals against specific measures of success, the relevant stakeholder survey questions and calculated composite index measures/ percentage results. The framework is intended to assist the GMA to identify areas for improvement, develop targets for each measure of success (MOS) and track changes in performance indicators (PI) over time. The full measurement framework is available in Appendix A.

For some performance indicators in the framework, an aggregate performance index has been constructed. The aggregate index for an area is the average of individual question indices for questions in that section, reported as index points (ip). The index for a question is the mean (average) response for the question across respondents (using the numerical score from the 5-point response scale) transformed into a 0 to 100 point scale.

Table 4 below summarises the performance scores across all stakeholder groups against the measures in the framework.

**Table 4: Summary of performance scores**

Performance indicator	Stakeholder group	Performance Scores
<b>Goal: Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator</b> <b>Key result: Stakeholders and the broader community clearly understand our purpose and our role in contributing to sustainability and responsibility in game hunting</b>		
<b>MOS1: Stakeholders have a good understanding of the GMA's role</b>		
<b>PI1. Increase in stakeholders' understanding of the GMA's role</b>	Partner agencies (n=27)	84%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=18)	79%
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=11)	88%
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	66%

	Game licence holders (n=3,983)	66%
	♦ Deer only (n=2,202)	66%
	♦ Game Birds only (n=382)	65%
	♦ Both (n=1,008)	68%
<b>MOS2. Stakeholders are satisfied with the GMA's provision of information and with their engagement experience</b>		
<b>PI2.1.</b> Increase in stakeholders' satisfaction with the GMA's provision of information and their engagement experience	Partner agencies (n=26)	87.3ip
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	57.7ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=9)	73.6ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	37.2ip
<b>PI2.2.</b> Increase in game licence holders' satisfaction with the GMA's provision of information and their engagement experience	Game licence holders (n=3,050)	69.6ip
	♦ Deer only (n=1,771)	74.1ip
	♦ Game Birds only (n=263)	64.0ip
	♦ Both (n=839)	65.6ip
<b>PI2.3.</b> Increase in game licence holders' satisfaction with their interactions with GMA Game Officers	Game licence holders (n=268)	69.1ip
	♦ Deer only (n=96)	68.7ip
	♦ Game Birds only (n=38)	65.3ip
	♦ Both (n=126)	72.8ip

<b>MOS3. Stakeholders support the GMA's compliance activities</b>		
<b>PI3.</b> Increase in stakeholders' perceived effectiveness of the GMA's compliance activities  *Please note the components of the compliance index comprise different questions for partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations compared to game licence holders, hence the index scores are not directly comparable.	Partner agencies (n=16)	76.6ip
	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=15)	31.7ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	45.0ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=5)	5.0ip
	Game licence holders* (n=2,812)	51.5ip
	♦ Deer only (n=1,613)	53.2ip
	♦ Game Birds only (n=298)	51.6ip
	♦ Both (n=845)	48.3ip
<b>MOS4. Stakeholders have confidence in the advice and work of the GMA</b>		
<b>PI4.1.</b> Increase in stakeholders' satisfaction with the advice provided by the GMA	Partner agencies (n=23)	80.7ip
	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=17)	43.0ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	53.3ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	28.3ip
<b>PI4.2.</b> Increase in stakeholders' perceived effectiveness of the GMA in managing game seasons in line with scientific advice/ evidence	Partner agencies (n=18)	94%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=17)	24%
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	40%
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	0%

<b>PI4.3.</b> Increase in partner agencies' agreement that the GMA demonstrates a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues	Partner agencies (n=23)	87%
<b>PI4.4.</b> Increase in partner agencies' agreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities	Partner agencies (n=22)	82%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	44%
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=9)	78%
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	0%
	Game licence holders (n=3,087)	38%
	♦ Deer only (n=1,793)	48%
	♦ Game Birds only (n=354)	29%
	♦ Both (n=915)	27%



<b>Goal: Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of the GMA's work</b> <b>Key result: Hunter compliance and behaviour is improved through education programs based on evidence and an understanding of motivations, behaviours and capabilities</b>		
<b>MOS5. Apply a strategic approach to delivering targeted and relevant education to hunters and stakeholders</b>		
<b>PI5.1. Increase in stakeholders' satisfaction with the GMA's education resources</b>  <b>** Please note the education index for partner agencies is not directly comparable with peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders, as partner agencies were not asked the same question set about education resources.</b>	Partner agencies** (n=16)	73.4ip
	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=17)	50.1ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	64.6ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	29.4ip
	Game licence holders (n=2,144)	68.6ip
	♦ Deer only (n=1,265)	72.9ip
	♦ Game Birds only (n=186)	64.1ip
	♦ Both (n=636)	64.2ip
<b>PI5.2. Increase usage of the GMA's education resources among hunters</b>	Game licence holders (n=3,662)	63%
	♦ Deer only (n=2,171)	63%
	♦ Game Birds only (n=376)	55%
	♦ Both (n=992)	70%

<b>Goal: Ensure hunting of native game species is conducted sustainably and in ways that minimise adverse animal welfare outcomes</b> <b>Key result: Our research and monitoring program provide evidence to effectively inform regulation of hunting and programs to improve hunter capability and behaviour to reduce adverse animal welfare outcomes</b>		
<b>MOS6. Foster a culture of respect for ethical hunting practices and hunting laws, and continuously improve compliance with game hunting laws</b>		
<b>PI6.1.</b> Increase in the proportion of stakeholders who feel the GMA's work is effective in encouraging sustainable, lawful and responsible hunting practices	Partner agencies (n=16)	71.1ip
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	33.6ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	47.5ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=6)	10.4ip
	Game licence holders (n=2,615)	39.8ip
	♦ Deer only (n=1,459)	47.1ip
	♦ Game Birds only (n=306)	32.8ip
	♦ Both (n=831)	33.6ip
<b>PI6.2.</b> Increase in the proportion of game licence holders who agree the GMA's services assist them to be a lawful and responsible hunter	Game licence holders (n=3,425)	68%
	♦ Deer only (n=2,071)	77%
	♦ Game Birds only (n=360)	56%
	♦ Both (n=968)	60%

## IV. Awareness and understanding of the GMA's role

### Performance indicators

Partner agencies (84%) and peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting (88%) had the greatest understanding of the GMA's role. Understanding of the GMA's role was similar among peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting (66%) and game licence holders (66%). Understanding was similar among game licence holders endorsed for deer only (66%), game birds only (65%) or both (68%).

**Figure 1: Understanding score**

(Base: Respondents who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)

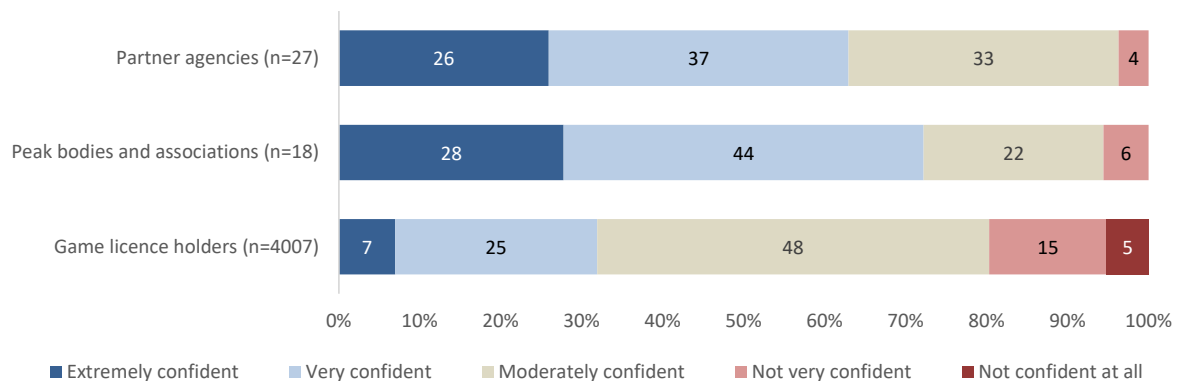
Understanding score = Average % correct responses; Range [0,100].	Stakeholder group	Score
	Partner agencies (n=27)	84%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=18)	79%
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=11)	88%
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=9)	66%
	Game licence holders (n=3,983)	66%
	◆ Deer only (n=2,202)	66%
	◆ Game Birds only (n=382)	65%
	◆ Both (n=1,008)	68%

### Confidence in understanding of the GMA's role

The majority of partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations were 'very' or 'extremely' confident in their understanding of the GMA's role. Peak bodies/ associations reported slightly higher confidence (72%) than partner agencies (63%). Reported confidence was higher among peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting (91%) than those opposed to hunting (43%).

Confidence among game licence holders was notably lower (32% 'very' or 'extremely' confident). One fifth (20%) of game licence holders were 'not very confident' or 'not confident at all' that they understood the GMA's role.

**Figure 2: Confidence in understanding of the GMA's role**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q2/Q2/Q3. Overall, how confident are you in your understanding of the GMA's role?

## Unprompted understanding of the GMA's role

Stakeholders were asked, unprompted, what they thought the GMA's main role(s) was in Victoria.

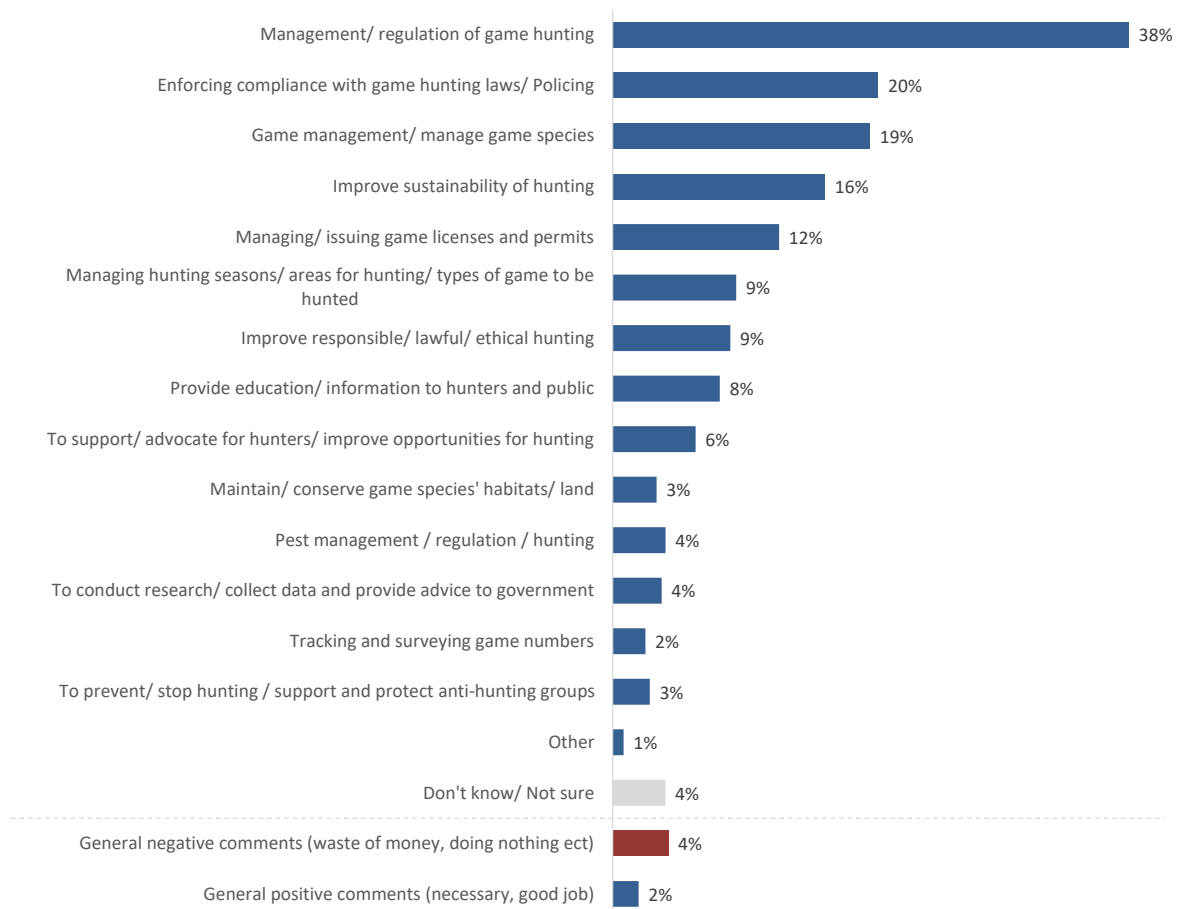
All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations demonstrated some overall understanding of the GMA's role. Most indicated the GMA's role was to manage/ regulate game hunting in Victoria (82%). One third (33%) of partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations also mentioned the GMA's role was to enforce compliance with game hunting laws. All other comments related to other areas within the GMA's remit.

Game licence holders reported a generally good understanding of the GMA's role, without prompting. Game licence holders' comments largely reflected the GMA's main roles:

- ◆ Management/ regulation of game hunting (38%);
- ◆ Enforce compliance with game hunting laws/ policing of hunters (20%);
- ◆ Game management/ manage game species (19%)
- ◆ Improve sustainability of hunting (16%);
- ◆ Managing/ issuing game licences and permits (12%);
- ◆ Managing hunting seasons/ areas for hunting/ types of game to be hunted (9%);
- ◆ Improve responsible/ lawful/ ethical hunting (9%); and
- ◆ Providing education/ information to hunters and the community (8%).

Only a minority (6%) felt the GMA's role was to support/ advocate for hunters and hunters' rights, in the absence of prompting.

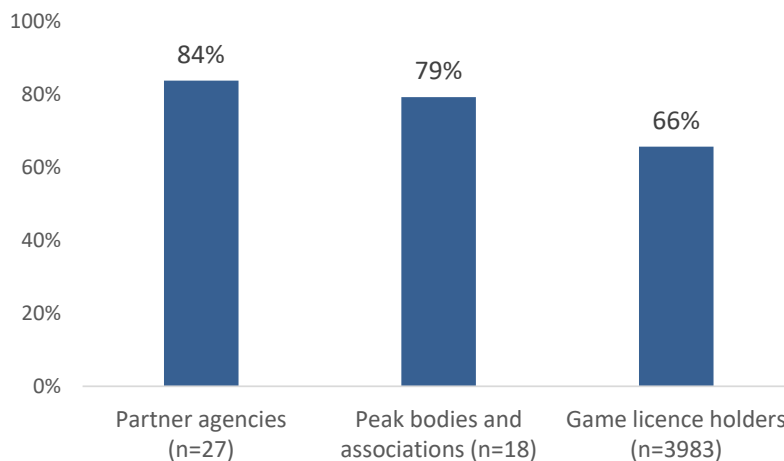
**Figure 3: Unprompted understanding of the GMA's role**  
(Base: All game licence holders, n=3,849)



## Prompted understanding of the GMA's role

Prompted understanding of the GMA's role (inferred by the proportion of correct answers to true and false statements) was generally high across the three groups. Although peak bodies/ associations reported somewhat higher confidence in their understanding of GMA's role, the average proportion of correct responses was highest among partner agencies (84% correct), followed by peak bodies/ associations (79%) and game licence holders (66%).

**Figure 4: Average percentage of correct responses**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q3a-k/Q3a-k/Q4a-k. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.

The vast majority of all respondents (over eight in ten) answered nearly all the 'true' statements correctly, apart from '*researching the impacts of game hunting/ game management*' (17% incorrect among peak bodies/ associations).

All stakeholder groups were more likely to incorrectly answer 'false' statements, apart from '*issuing firearms licences*', which all partners agencies and peak bodies, and nearly all game licence holders answered correctly.

Understanding was lowest in relation to whether the GMA's role includes '*promoting hunting of game species*' among all groups. Two thirds of game holders (67%) and nearly half of partner agencies (48%) and peak bodies (44%) incorrectly indicated that promoting hunting was part of the GMA's role.

Peak body/ association participants in the qualitative research who were unsure, or had members who were unsure if the GMA's role was to promote hunting most commonly indicated this was because:

- ◆ They perceived some of the GMA's communications and activities to be promoting hunting; and

*"I know they are the regulator. The difficulty is they appear to be a promoter and that comes down to an internal conflict. They appear to be doing both, and that in itself is unsustainable."*

*“Because of the tone of its media releases and conversations... seems to be a desire to make hunting easier for people.”*

- ◆ They assumed promoting hunting would logically fall under the GMA’s remit because of its name.

*“The actual name of the GMA is a bit of a misnomer; hunters expect them to be a game manager and that’s not what they are.”*

*“GMA isn’t a game management authority, it’s a hunter management authority and it needs to reflect that.”*

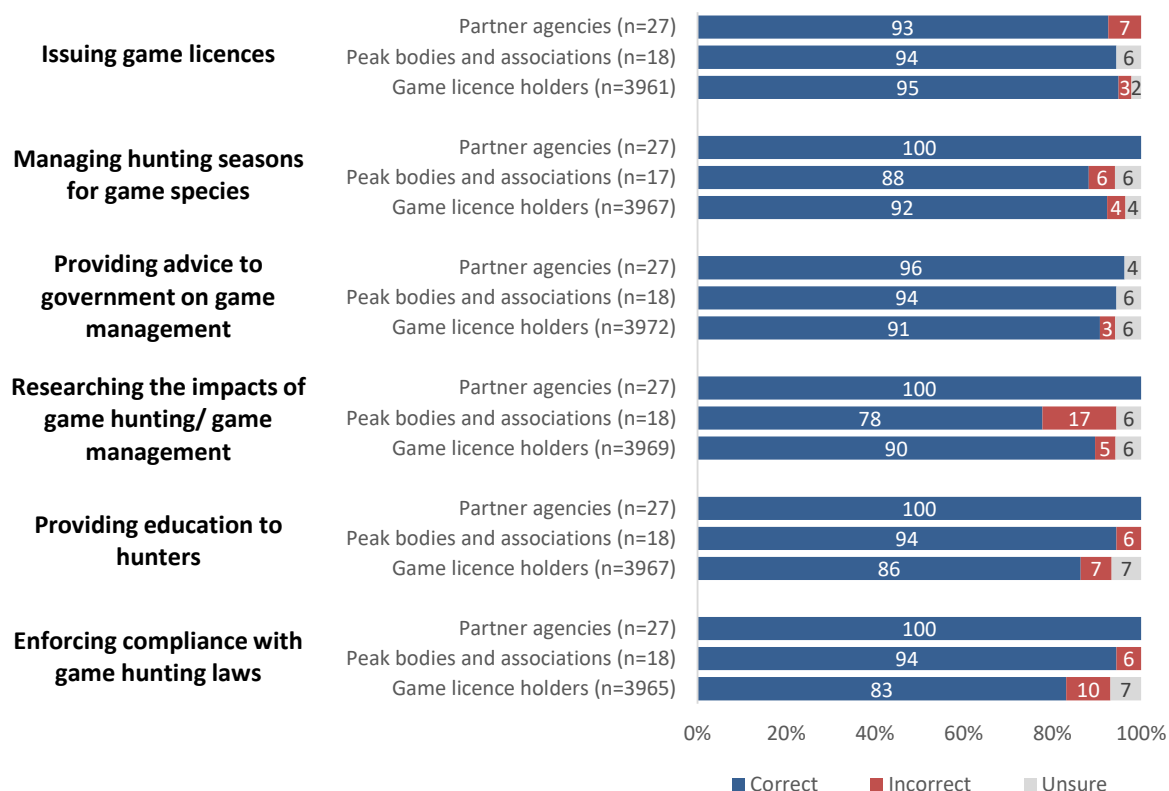
Some partner agency participants also felt that the GMA’s role in relation to policy development and compliance activities could be more clearly defined to prevent overlap with other government organisations.

*“It’s a bit blurred in that kind of policy, legislative and data management space. It’s not 100% clear. I’d go to two places [for issues] – our [internal] policy division and then out to GMA.”*

*“The regulation and compliance activities are clearly part of their role, but it’s confusing about who’s doing what.”*

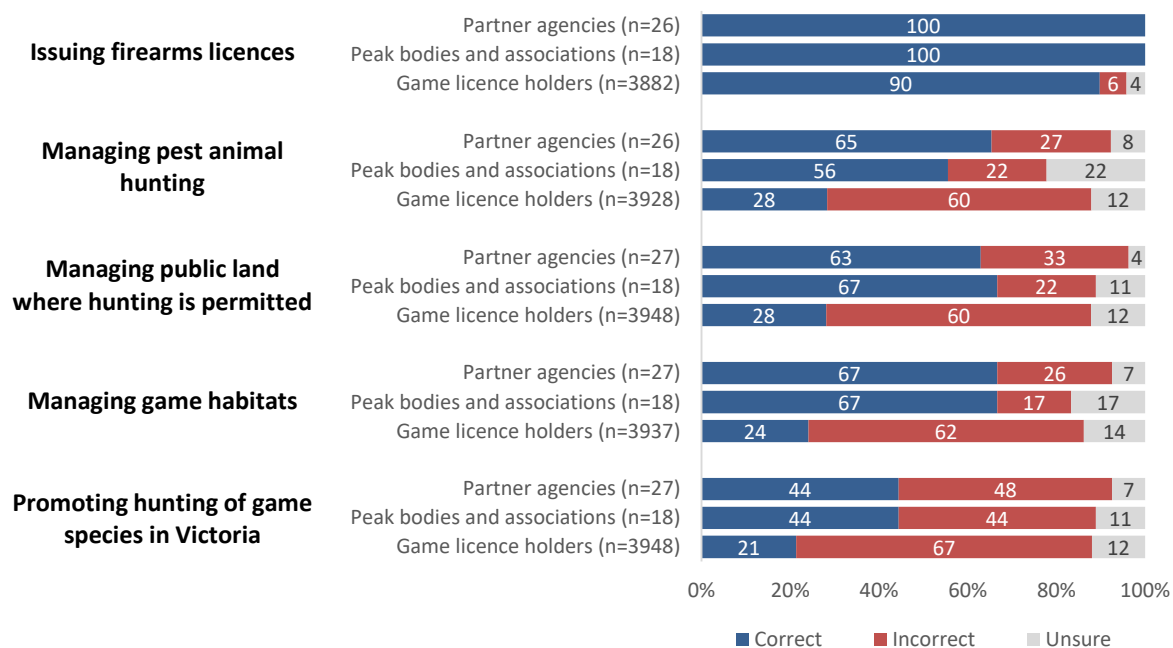
*“There definitely is ambiguity, we’ve got complementary regulatory roles (which we understand) but they are overlapping.”*

**Figure 5: Breakdown of correct responses (True statements)**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q3f-k/Q3f-k/Q4f-k. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA’s role.

**Figure 6: Breakdown of correct responses (False statements)**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q3a-e/Q3a-e/Q4a-e. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.

Many peak bodies/ associations in the qualitative research who were involved in hunting felt their members did not have a good understanding of the GMA's role. These participants felt it was important for the GMA to improve their members' understanding of its role to build trust in the GMA and increase engagement with its resources.

*"There's a perception out there that GMA is supposed to be a 'cheerleader' for hunters. You see colleagues on social media saying 'why aren't they representing us?' That's not their job, they're the umpire."*

*"People have an expectation of what they should be doing, which causes a bit of dissatisfaction."*

When prompted about whether they felt the GMA should have a different role or responsibilities, most partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting felt the GMA's current roles were fit for purpose. However, many peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting felt that promoting hunting of game species should explicitly be part of the GMA's role.

*"As a regulator, you have to promote good hunting practices if you want to change hunters' behaviour – they need to get off the fence. Like any other regulator, like Vic Pol, Fisheries, Marine Safety, they need to promote sustainable and ethical hunting."*

*"The media are always looking for an angle to make hunting look bad, always a perception that hunters are biased – vilify an entire group of people for the actions of a few. We'd like to see the GMA provide more backup for hunters that are doing the right thing."*



Some peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting also felt that the GMA should have a direct role in managing game species.

*“Because they don't manage habitat and they're not able to promote hunting, they're very restricted in what they can do and what they can do for game species. They're very hampered by that lack of ability and therefore they're not who I'd like them to be.”*

*“Managing state game reserves for the production of game species.”*

## V. Engagement with the GMA (partners and peak bodies/ associations)

### Performance indicators

Among those who engaged directly with the GMA in the last 12 months, partner agencies reported the most positive perceptions of their engagement (87.3ip). Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting were least positive about their engagement (37.2ip).

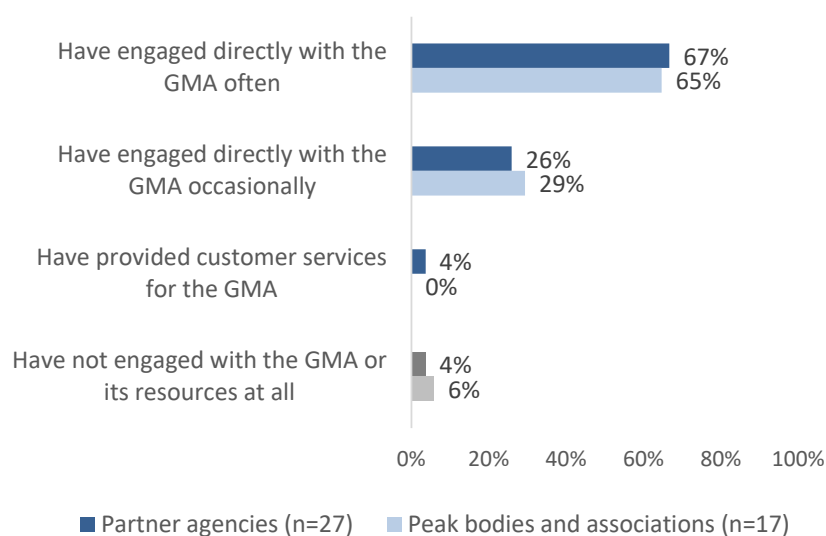
**Table 5: Engagement Index Score**

<b>Engagement index:</b> Index score = <u>Weighted*</u> average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: overall satisfaction + aspects relating to engagement; Range [0,100]  *Higher weight assigned to overall satisfaction question (30%)	Stakeholder group	Index Score
	Partner agencies (n=26)	87.3ip
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	57.7ip
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=9)	73.6ip
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	37.2ip

### Types of engagement

In the last 12 months, nearly all stakeholders had engaged directly with the GMA 'often' or 'occasionally' (93% of partner agencies and 94% of peak bodies/ associations).

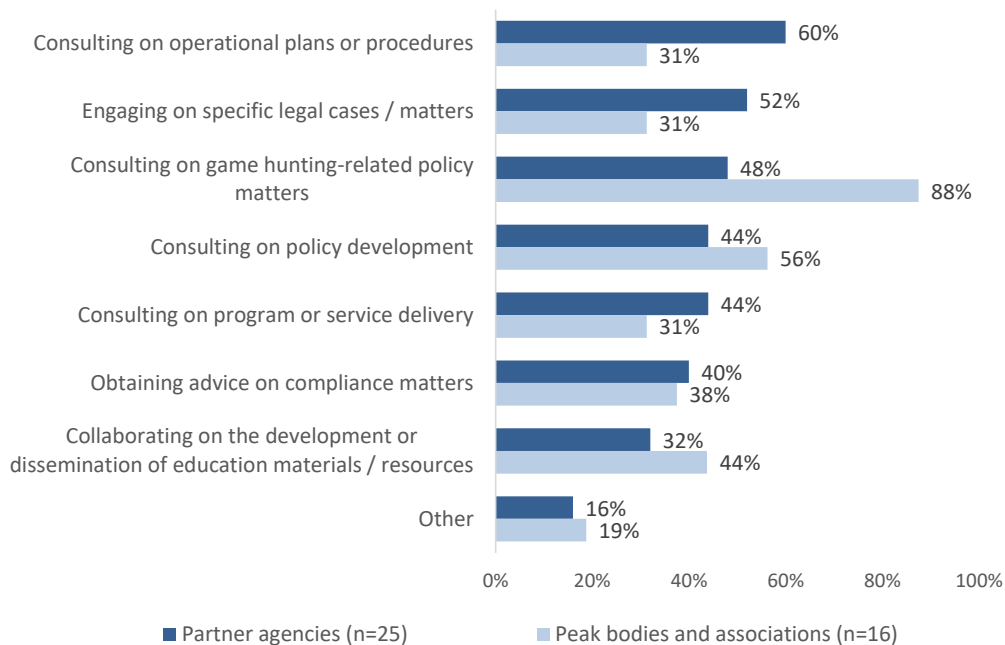
**Figure 7: Frequency of engagement in last 12 months**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q4/Q4. How would you describe your organisation's dealings with the GMA in the past 12 months?

Stakeholders engaged with the GMA for a range of purposes. Partner agencies were most likely to have consulted with the GMA on operational plans or procedures (60%) or engaged with the GMA on specific legal cases/ matters (52%). Peak bodies/ associations were most likely to have consulted with the GMA on game hunting-related policy matters (88%).

**Figure 8: Types of engagement in last 12 months**  
(Base: Respondents who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)



Q5/Q5. Which of the following types of dealings have you had with the GMA over the past 12 months?

Most partner agencies in the qualitative research felt the nature of engagement with the GMA was reciprocal, where they contacted the GMA about particular issues when required and vice versa. These participants were positive about the nature of engagement.

*“It’s not overly structured, we don’t have regular meetings because when the relationship is good you don’t need to.”*

Some partner agencies felt the relationship was more one-way (the GMA approaching them for advice/ services or their organisation approaching the GMA), but these participants were satisfied with this relationship based on the nature of the dealings.

Peak bodies/ associations in the qualitative research were less likely to feel they had a reciprocal relationship with the GMA. Some indicated the GMA usually engaged if they approached their organisation for information, but when their organisation wished to raise an issue with the GMA, the engagement was not as welcomed.

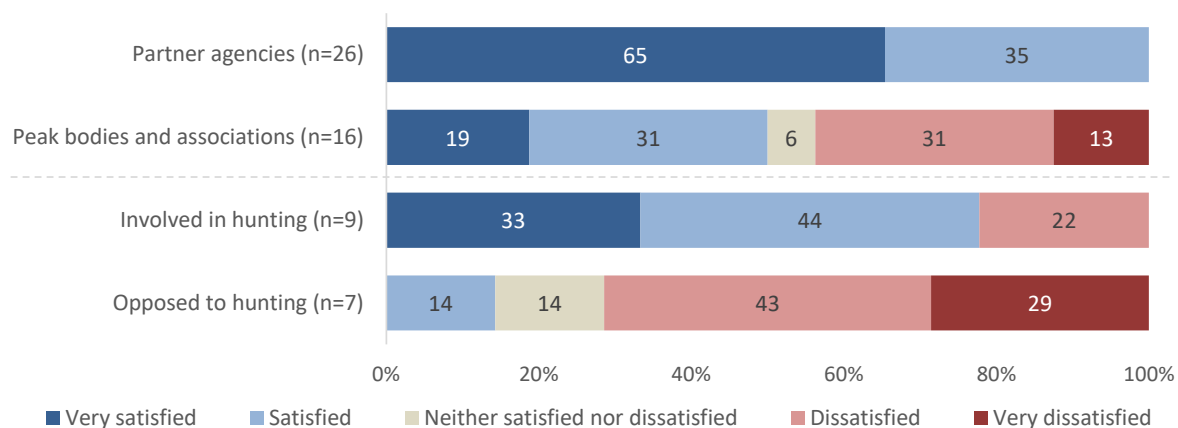
*“If the GMA want something they’re straight on the phone, but if stakeholders have a request or comment then it gets put aside.”*

## Perceptions of engagement

All partner agencies (100%) who had engaged with the GMA were satisfied with how the GMA engaged with their organisation.

In contrast, half (50%) of peak bodies/ associations were satisfied with how the GMA engaged with them. Overall satisfaction was much higher among organisations involved in hunting (78%) compared to those opposed to hunting (14%).

**Figure 9: Overall satisfaction with how the GMA engaged with organisation**  
(Base: Respondents who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)



Q6/Q6. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with how the GMA engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months?

Respondents from partner agencies provided positive ratings across nearly all aspects of engagement. These ratings were reflected in primarily positive qualitative feedback, including feedback the GMA is:

- ◆ Knowledgeable about game management;

*"They do have a lot of knowledge, they have been working in this space for a very long time."*

- ◆ Easy to engage with;

*"They're very prompt - it's a good working relationship, efficient and effective. Straightforward process and we never have any issues trying to get them to respond."*

- ◆ Timely; and

*"Very considered, when they do seek assistance they do so in a reasonable period of time, which isn't common amongst a lot of government departments."*

- ◆ Collaborative.

*"Back and forth is very supportive, open lines of communication, wanting to collaborate and share. A very constructive relationship."*

Some partner agencies provided suggestions for improvement, which primarily related to:

- ◆ Improving the clarity/ delineation of responsibilities between the GMA and their organisation;

*“I think we can improve on better delineating responsibilities around waterbird counts for duck season. There is also some confusion around roles and responsibilities for deer control.”*

- ◆ Providing more formal channels of communication for engagement – such as regular formal meetings;

*“We almost certainly need to engage more at a formal level. I have several personal relationships with GMA staff and we interact when necessary, however this is due to history rather than systems that ensure we are working on the same page... we do not work strategically together nearly enough.”*

- ◆ Increase sharing of information;

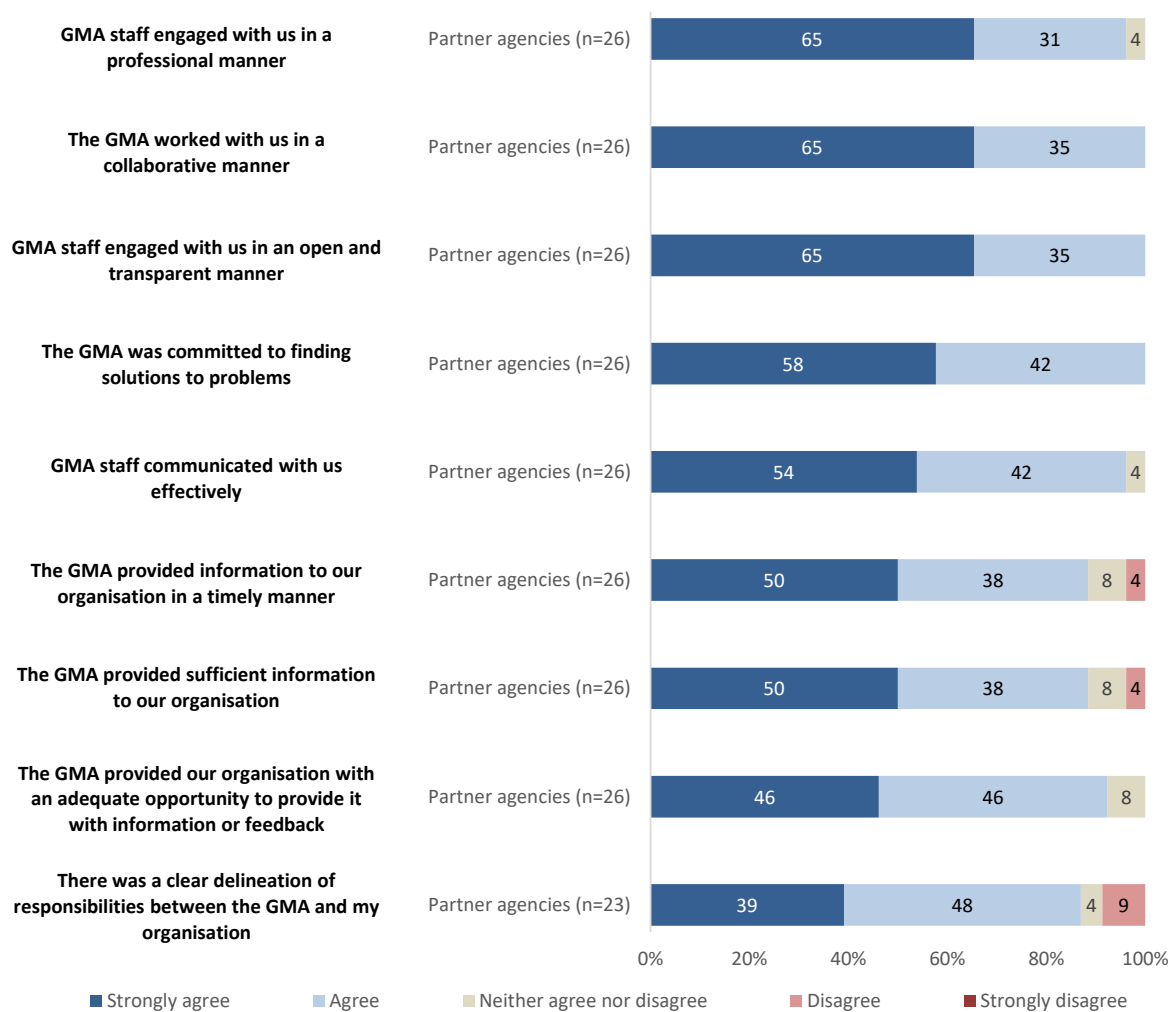
*“They could share and communicate [their research] better, to maybe key players within the Department. Sometimes I’ve discovered that they have interesting research or working on a particular project that is of relevance of me but I only find out when I ask prompting questions.”*

- ◆ Increasing transparency around the rationale for decisions made – including any decisions made by the Board in contrast to the original advice provided to partner agencies; and

*“They are transparent in some ways. What’s not transparent is when it gets to the Board level. I trust the people I deal with at the GMA but at the Board level it’s hard to understand how they get to those conclusions sometimes.”*

- ◆ Allowing additional time for input into decisions around duck season – a few partner agencies felt the turnaround time for submissions was very short and the timing was inconvenient, due to its proximity to Christmas.

**Figure 10: Perceptions of engagement – partner agencies**  
(Base: Partner agencies who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)

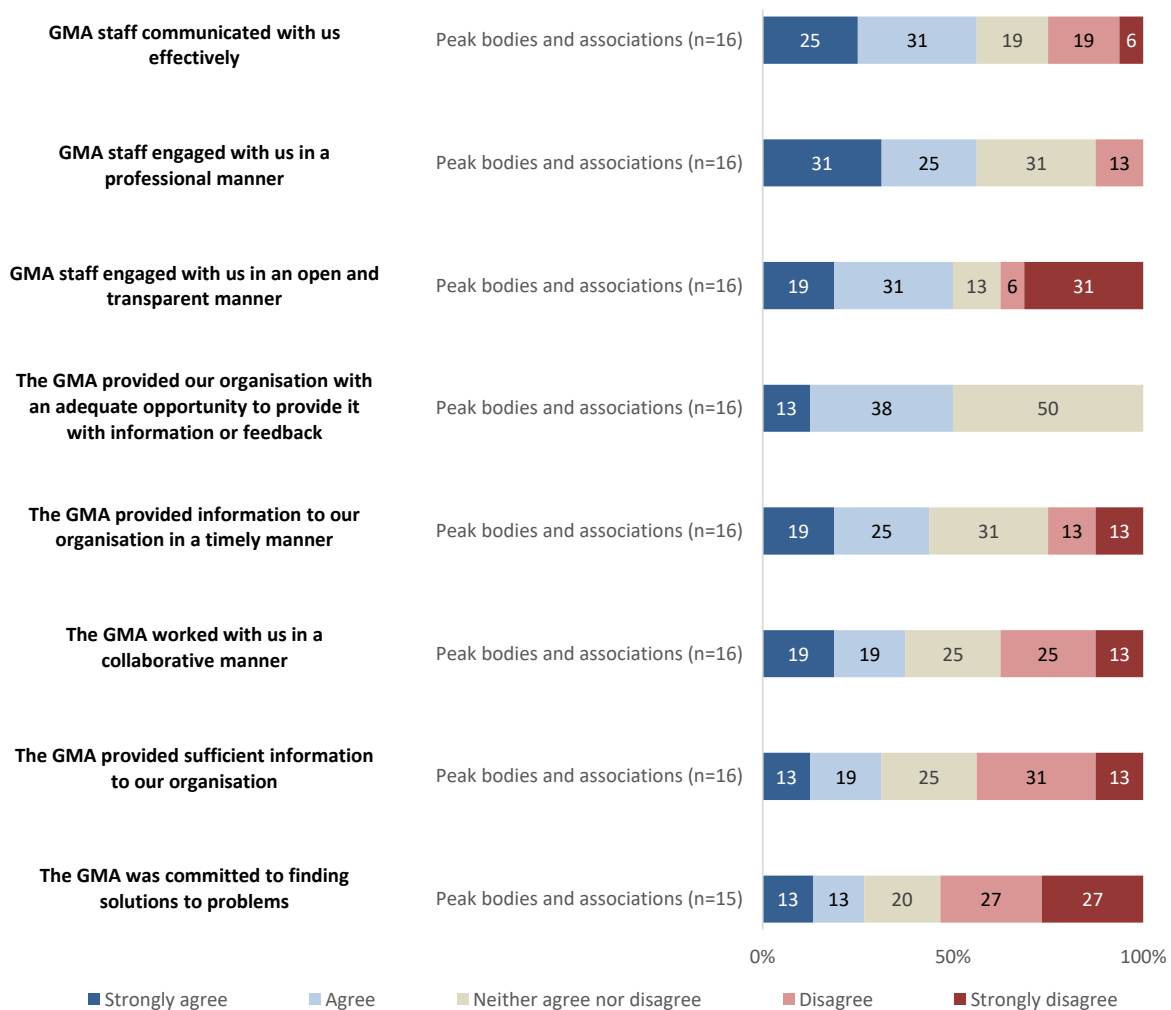


*Q7a-j. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months.*

Peak bodies/ associations reported less positive perceptions of their engagement with the GMA compared to partner agencies. Respondents were most likely to agree GMA staff communicated with them effectively (56%) and engaged with them professionally (56%). In contrast, respondents were least likely to agree the GMA provided sufficient information to their organisation (31%) and were committed to finding solutions to problems (27%).

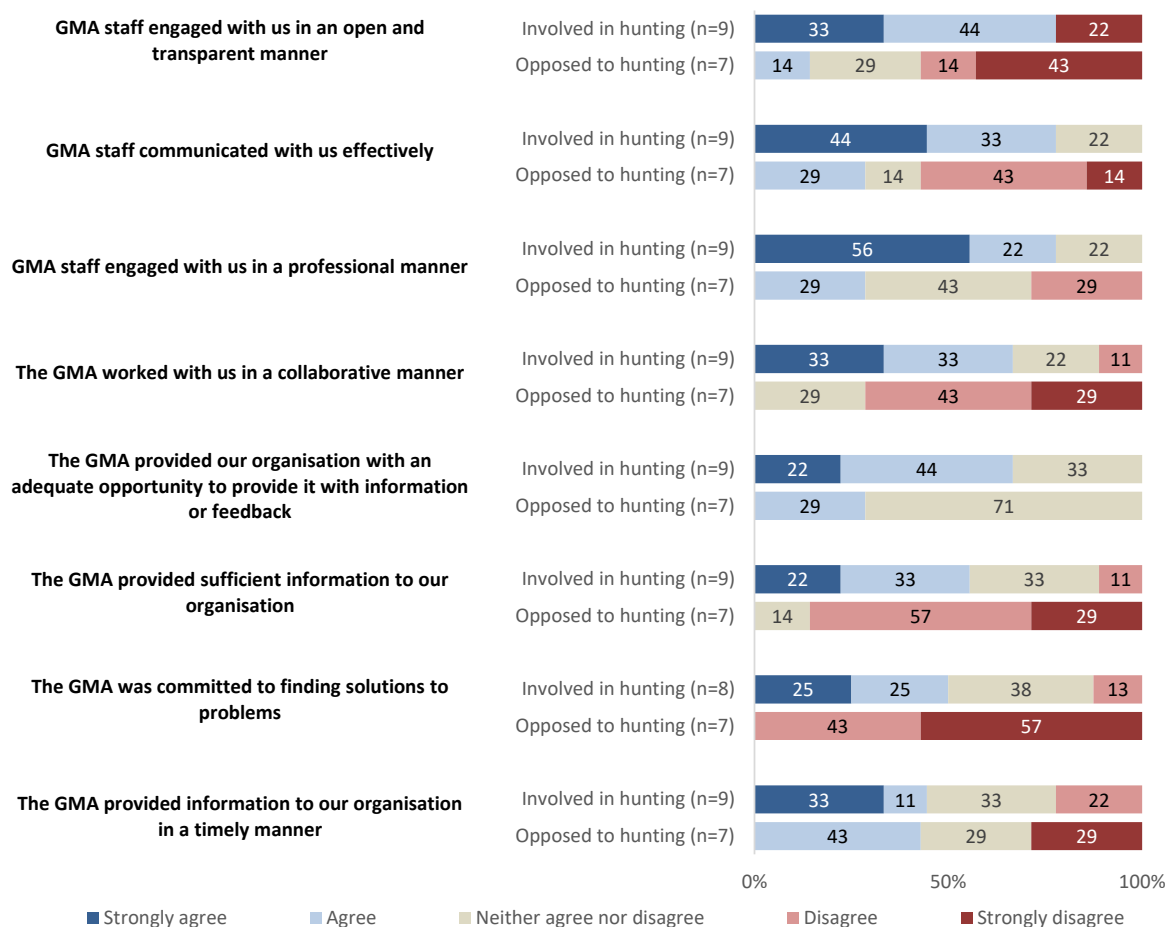
Peak bodies/ associations that were opposed to hunting provided less positive ratings for all aspects of engagement compared to those involved in hunting.

**Figure 11: Perceptions of engagement – peak bodies/ associations**  
(Base: Peak bodies/ associations who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)



Q7a-h. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months.

**Figure 12: Perceptions of engagement by type of organisation – peak bodies/ associations**  
(Base: Peak bodies/ associations who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)



Q7a-h. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months.

Most peak body/ association participants in the qualitative research provided positive feedback about GMA staff.

*“Most of the staff interactions are really good and staff are very professional and approachable.”*

However, most participants also provided suggestions for improvement primarily related to communication and consultation, including:

- ◆ Improving consultation with stakeholders in relation to key decisions – many participants felt major decisions were made without appropriate consultation with stakeholders or that if consultation occurred, the decision had already been made;

*“I think they could make a direct effort to approach some of the major clubs and groups and simply talk the issues through with them. Whether they have the resources to do it I'm unsure but I think they could do better in that space and foreshadow what they have in mind for particular issues.”*



*“In some areas consultation is good, in other areas it’s a bit of “lip service”. The decision is already made regardless of what we put into it. It’s not genuine consultation in our view.”*

- ◆ Improving transparency in relation to sharing of information and providing evidence/ rationale of why decisions have been made;
  - Many participants felt the decisions around duck season were not adequately explained;

*“No confidence in GMA setting seasons for duck hunting – cannot understand how they come to their decisions, they can’t explain or rationalise it.”*

- A few participants felt decisions made by the Board were made in contrast to what they were advised by GMA staff, so felt these decisions could be better explained;

*“It’s just a bit awkward. They make recommendations to the Board and the Board accepts them or not. While the staff make recommendations I might agree with, the Board might not endorse the decision... I’m confident their staff make the right recommendations in 98% of cases but will their Board endorse it?”*

- ◆ Improving proactive communication about useful information and decisions made – some participants reported the GMA did not proactively notify them about key information or decisions, and they only found out through other means;

*“The issue was that we found out about this through a very random way. We shouldn’t have had to ring the GMA to find out what it was. It should have been the other way around to find out something that was going to affect us... You’d expect a phone call or some engagement.”*

*“We don’t get clear advance notice of announcements, which would be appreciated.”*

- ◆ Improving proactive communication about the GMA’s activities more generally (e.g. updates on compliance activities, research) – a few participants felt this would assist them/ their members to better understand the GMA’s effectiveness;

*“Would like an update at least every couple of months... Suggestion to be signed up to their media releases like [other organisations] have or a forum where you can view updates.”*

- ◆ Improving opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders – a few participants felt there was opportunity for the GMA to collaborate with their organisation to deliver programs or conduct research;

*“We have a lot of information we’d be willing to share if they asked nicely – have offered to provide input but it’s not taken up.”*

*“The research hunters do, GMA doesn’t want to accept it... Research done by hunters is seen as biased.”*

- ◆ Improving how public consultations involving different stakeholder groups (i.e. pro- and anti-hunting groups) are managed – a few participants felt the GMA should better manage these meetings to ensure all attendees engage in a respectful manner; and

*“As it happens in the same meeting as pro hunting groups, it sets two very opposing views around the table where there’s supposed to be sensible negotiation as to the terms and*

*conditions of a duck hunting season. No sensible negotiation can take place when the only thing the 'anti' people would be satisfied is no season of any sort or hunting of anything."*

*"GMA-organised meetings are not adequately managed to create a respectful environment (free from abuse) for all participants. Suggestion -show values-based leadership including providing clear expectations on behaviour of participants in meetings and call out behaviour that is not acceptable - including comments that are not based in evidence."*

- ◆ Improving the timeliness of the process into decisions around duck season – a few participants felt the turnaround time for submissions was very short and the time taken to make a decision was too long/ did not allow hunters to prepare.

*"They rush us to put comprehensive reports in only so they can make recommendations to assist hunters to make their plans three months in advance."*

*"The decision-making process seems to get later and later. We've had lots of excuses given for the delay. Some of those were valid, but some we did not accept. We've effectively worked through the Christmas period just to wait six weeks for a decision on whether there'll be a season and how long it will be."*

## VI. Engagement with the GMA (game licence holders)

### Performance indicators

Game licence holders were generally positive about their engagement with the GMA in the past 12 months through its services (69.6ip) and with GMA Game Officers in the field (69.1ip). Those endorsed to hunt deer only reported the most positive perceptions of their engagement with the GMA's services (74.1ip). Those endorsed to hunt both deer and game birds were most positive about their interactions with GMA Game Officers in the field (72.8ip).

**Figure 13: Community engagement index**

(Base: Respondents who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)

<b>Community Engagement index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: average of the questions relating to game licence holders' engagement; Range [0,100]	Stakeholder group	Index Score
	Game licence holders (n=3,050)	69.6ip
	◆ Deer only (n=1,771)	74.1ip
	◆ Game Birds only (n=263)	64.0ip
	◆ Both (n=839)	65.6ip

**Figure 14: Game Officer index**

(Base: Respondents who engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)

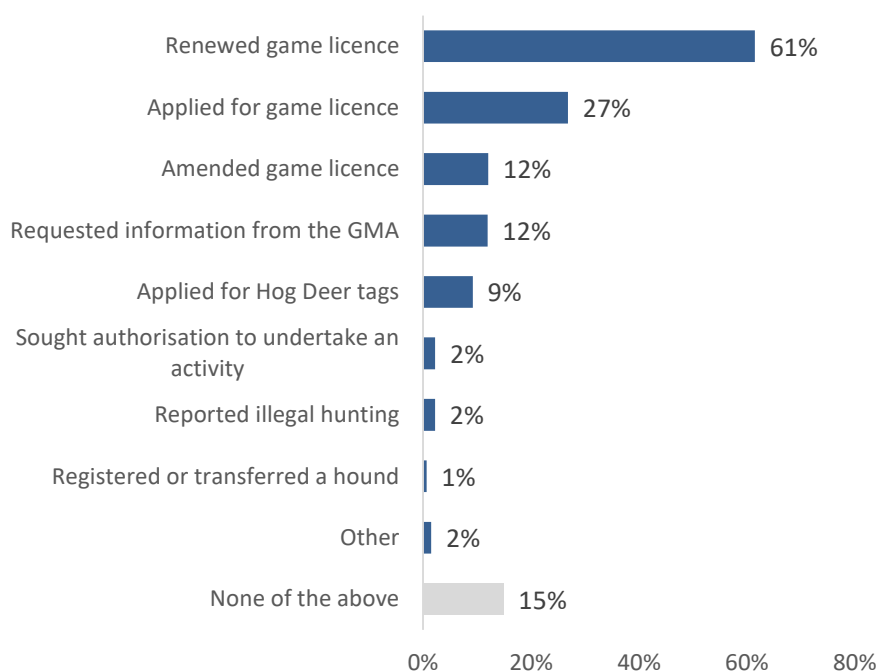
<b>Game Officer index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: average of the questions relating to interaction with Game Officers; Range [0,100]	Stakeholder group	Index Score
	Game licence holders (n=268)	69.1ip
	◆ Deer only (n=96)	68.7ip
	◆ Game Birds only (n=38)	65.3ip
	◆ Both (n=126)	72.8ip

## Types of engagement

Most game licence holders (85%) had used at least one of the GMA's services, apart from education resources, in the last 12 months. Those endorsed for game birds only were the least likely to have used any of GMA's services (77%, compared to 87% of those endorsed for deer only and 89% of those endorsed for both).

The most common GMA service that game licence holders used in the past 12 months was renewing their game licence (61%), followed by applying for a game licence (27%). Those whose licences were endorsed for both deer and game birds were the most likely to have used the majority of services. However, those endorsed for deer only were the most likely to have applied for a game licence (32%, compared to 15% of those endorsed for game birds only and 24% of those endorsed for both).

**Figure 15: Types of services/ engagements used in last 12 months**  
(Base: All game licence holders)



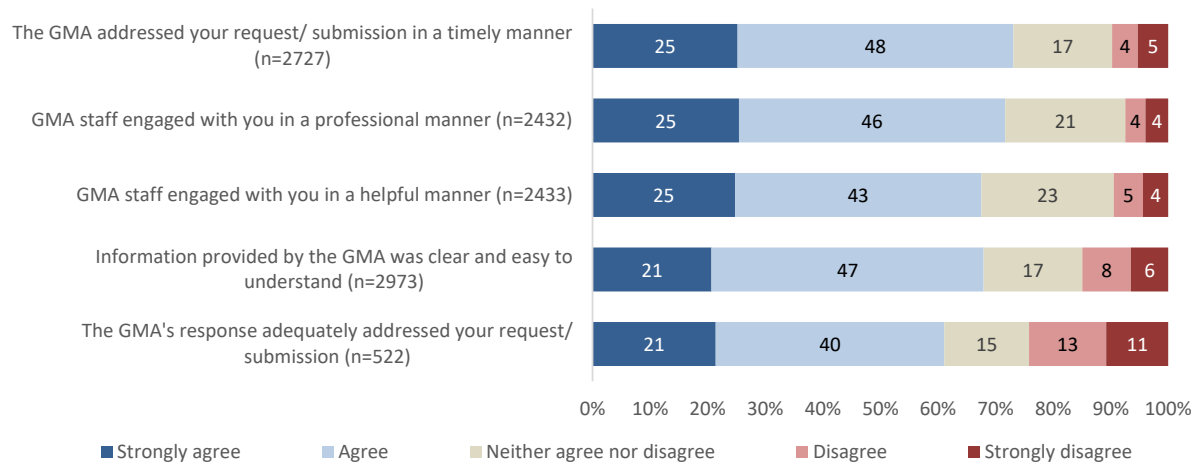
Q5. Which of the GMA's services have you used in the past 12 months?

## Perceptions of engagement

Among game licence holders who had used the GMA's services in the last 12 months, perceptions of the GMA's services were generally positive, with over six in ten rating each individual aspect positively. Game licence holders were most likely to agree that the GMA addressed their request/ submission in a timely manner (73%), and least likely to agree that their request/ submission was adequately addressed (61% among those who had interacted with the GMA beyond transactional services). Perceptions of the GMA's services were more positive among those endorsed for deer only across all aspects (69%-81%), compared to those endorsed for game birds only (50%-63%) and those endorsed for both (60%-69%).

**Figure 16: Perceptions of services/ engagements**

(Base: Respondents who used the GMA's services/ engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months)



**Q6. Thinking about your interactions with the GMA in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

Among those who had used the GMA's services or engaged directly in the last 12 months, qualitative feedback most commonly included positive comments about GMA staff (e.g. friendly, helpful) (17%) or their experience in general (11%).

*"Great professional, fast service. It was fantastic to talk to someone who had all the info in front of them and could provide answers and a solution immediately, and the solution was simple to execute."*

Negative feedback and suggestions for improvement most commonly related to:

- ◆ Poor experiences with GMA staff (e.g. rude, unhelpful, not knowledgeable) (12%);

*"Every time I have spoken to them I was made to feel like a criminal and they were just waiting to fine me for something."*

*"I found that during phone conversations with GMA employees they could not provide specific yes or no answers on certain rules and regulations regarding hunting."*

- ◆ Issues with limits and restrictions on hunters (11%); and

*"Failed to supply adequate explanation of reasons for short duck season that was predominantly spent in lockdown for greater Melbourne."*

*"Thought that the change to duck season was deceiving and unfair. No more than a revenue grab for the government."*

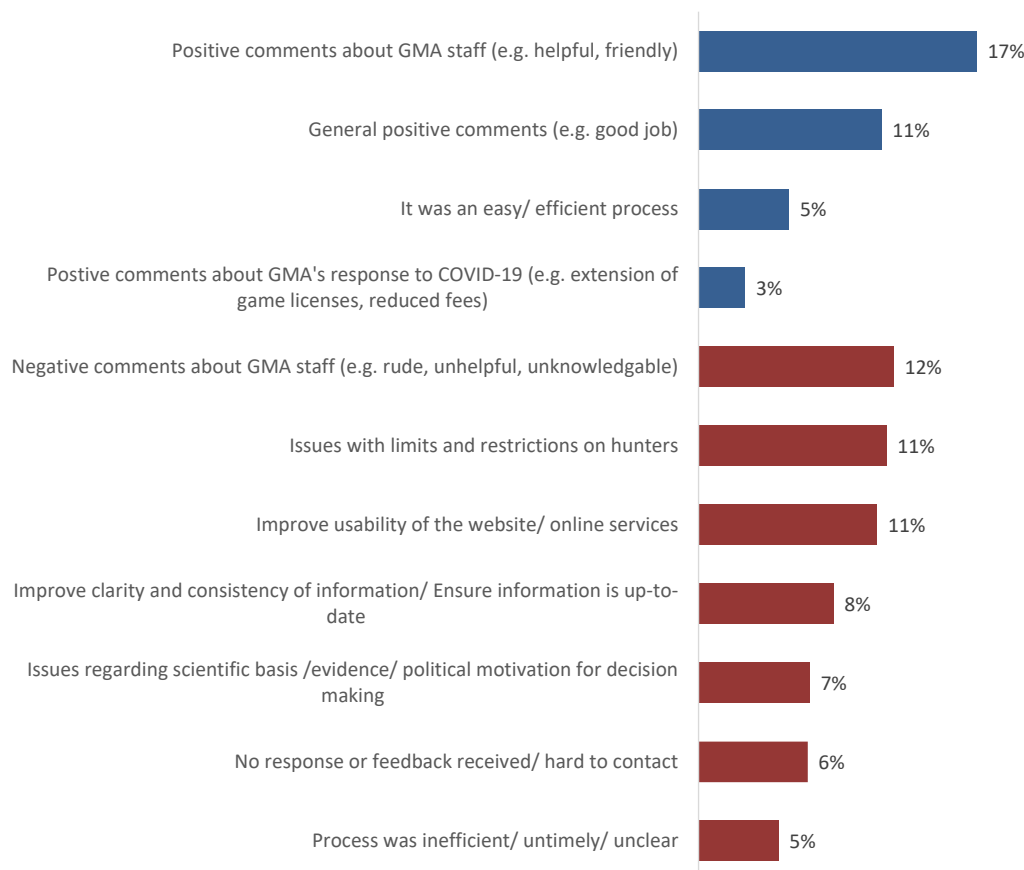
- ◆ Improving usability of the website/ online services (11%) – many of these comments related to applying for Hog Deer tags.

*"It was extremely difficult to log into the website to obtain my hog deer tags. Every hunter I spoke to said the same thing, even computer savvy people."*

*“When using the website (myGL) I found navigation difficult. When clicking on the link to direct you to the area required, it still didn't give the information. I had to phone for help.”*

**Figure 17: Most frequent comments relating to interactions with the GMA in the past 12 months**

(Base: Respondents who used the GMA's services/ engaged directly with the GMA in last 12 months, n=1,046)



Q7. Do you have any feedback on your interactions with the GMA in the past 12 months? In particular, if you disagreed with any of the statements above, please explain why.

## Feedback

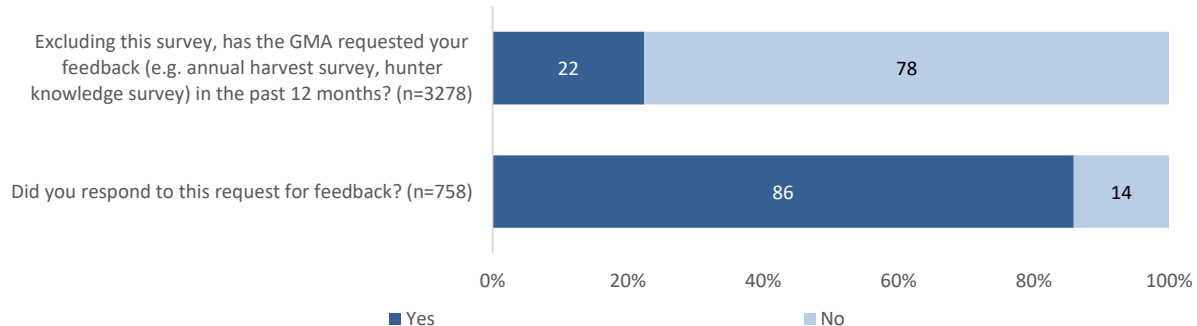
Just over one fifth (22%) of game licence holders reported the GMA had requested their feedback in the past 12 months (apart from this survey). Of these, the vast majority (86%) responded to the request. Those endorsed for both deer and game birds were more likely to have received a request (33%, compared to 19% of those who only held one type of licence) and report having provided this feedback (92% of those invited, compared to 83%-84%).

Among game licence holders who received an invitation to provide feedback, most agreed that the purpose for requesting this was clear (77%) and an appropriate method was used to

collect this feedback (81%). Perceptions of the feedback process were most positive among those endorsed for deer only.

**Figure 18: Provided feedback to the GMA in past 12 months**

(Base: All game licence holders/ respondents who received an invitation to provide feedback)

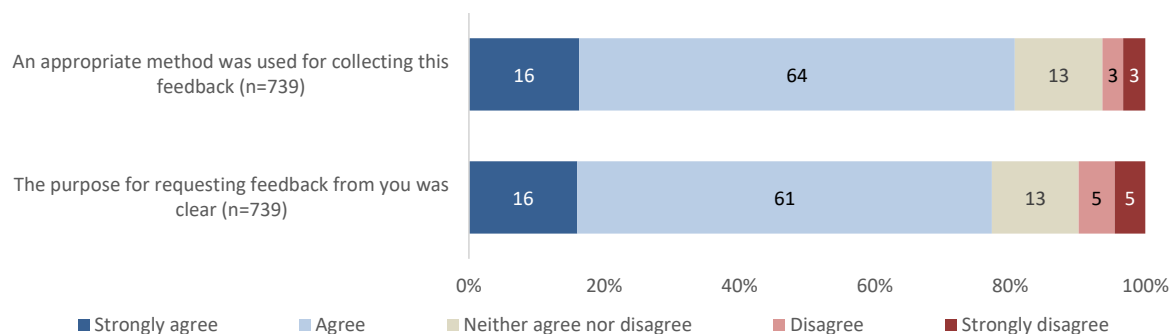


Q8. Excluding this survey, has the GMA requested your feedback (e.g. annual harvest survey, hunter knowledge survey) in the past 12 months?

Q9. Did you respond to this request for feedback?

**Figure 19: Perceptions of feedback process**

(Base: All game licence holders)



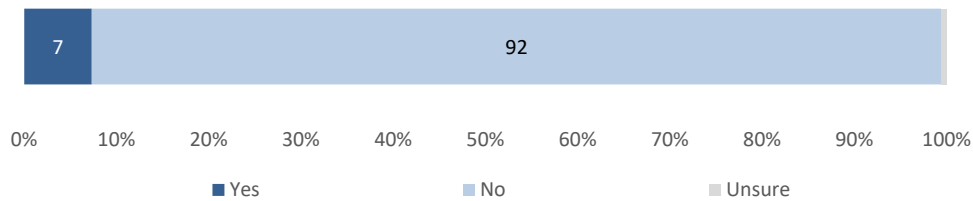
Q10. Thinking about when the GMA has requested your feedback, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

## Game Officers

Less than one tenth (7%) of game licence holders had interacted with GMA Game Officers in the field in the past 12 months. Those who were endorsed for deer only were the least likely to have interacted with Game Officers (4%) compared to those endorsed for game birds only (10%) or both (11%).

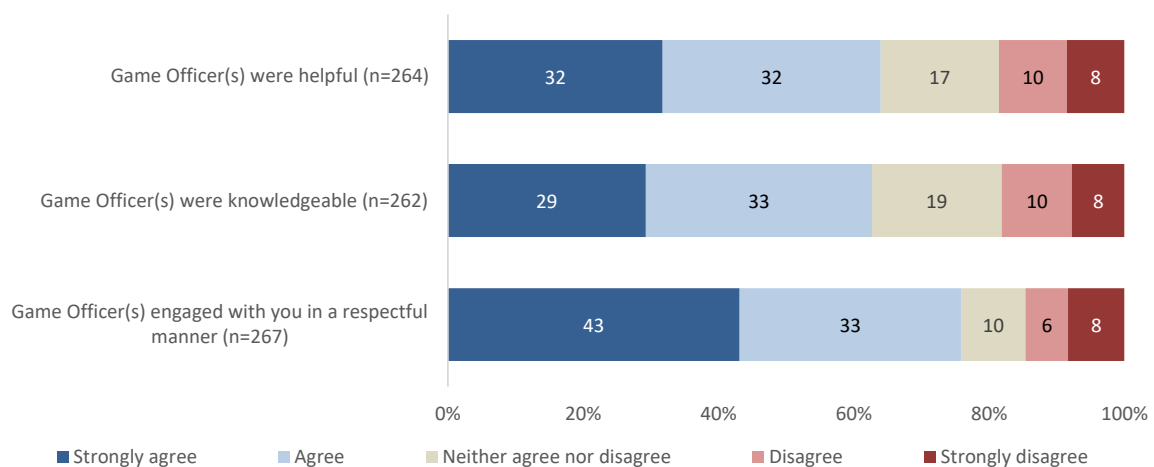
Among those who interacted with GMA Game Officers in the past 12 months, the majority (76%) agreed the officers were respectful. Although still positive, agreement was slightly lower in relation to the Game Officers' helpfulness (64%) and knowledge (63%). Perceptions of Game Officers was most positive among those endorsed for both deer and game birds (70%-82%) and lowest among those only endorsed for game birds (54%-71%).

**Figure 20: Interacted with GMA Game Officers in past 12 months**  
(Base: All game licence holders, n=3,690)



Q15. Have you interacted with any GMA Game Officers while hunting/ in the field over the past 12 months?

**Figure 21: Perceptions of interaction with GMA Game Officers**  
(Base: Respondents who interacted with GMA Game Officers in the field over the past 12 months)

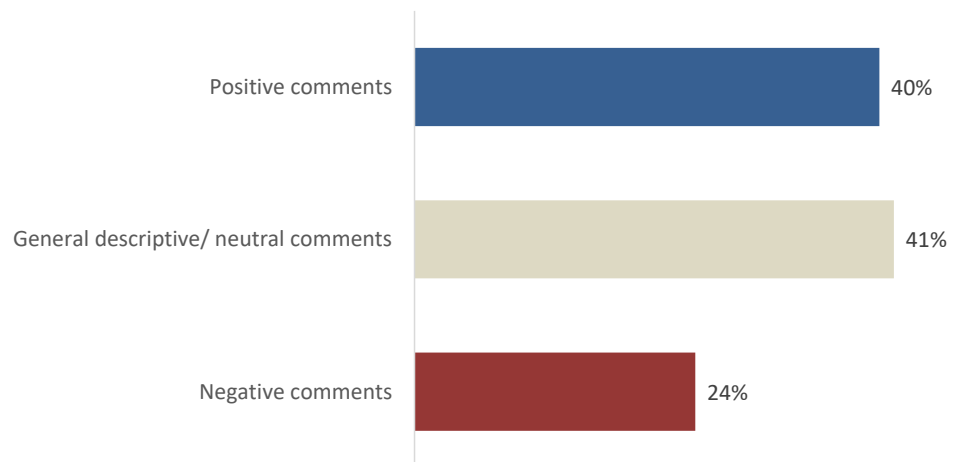


Q17. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your interactions with GMA Game Officers over the past 12 months.

Among those who had interacted with GMA Game Officers in the past 12 months, the vast majority either provided positive feedback about the game officers (e.g. they were friendly, professional, helpful) or provided a descriptive/ neutral comment about the nature of their interaction. Just under one quarter (24%) of comments included negative feedback, commonly relating to the attitude and lack of knowledge of the GMA officer they encountered.



**Figure 22: Comments relating to interaction with GMA Game Officers on field**  
(Base: Respondents who interacted with GMA Game Officers in the field over the past 12 months, n=253)



Q16. Please describe this interaction.

## VII. Compliance activities

### Performance indicators

Partner agencies reported largely positive perceptions of the GMA's compliance operations (76.6ip). Peak bodies/ associations reported less positive perceptions of the GMA's compliance operations (31.7ip). Organisations involved in hunting (45.0ip) were more positive than those opposed to hunting (5.0ip).

On average, game licence holders provided neutral ratings in relation to the GMA's compliance activities (51.5ip). Perceptions of compliance were similar among all types of licence holders.

**Table 6: Compliance index**  
(Base: All respondents)

<b>Compliance index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: average of the questions relating to compliance; Range [0,100]	Stakeholder group	Index Score
	Partner agencies (n=16)	76.6ip
	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=15)	31.7ip
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=10)	45.0ip
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=5)	5.0ip

<b>Compliance index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: average of the questions relating to compliance; Range [0,100]	Game licence holders (n=2,812)	51.5ip
	◆ Deer only (n=1,613)	53.2ip
	◆ Game Birds only (n=298)	51.6ip
	◆ Both (n=845)	48.3ip

Please note the components of the compliance index comprise different questions for partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations compared to game licence holders, hence the index scores are not directly comparable.

### Perceptions of compliance activities

Most partner agencies (94%) felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective in undertaking a coordinated approach to compliance operations. In contrast, only around half (47%) of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective. Perceived effectiveness was much lower among those opposed to hunting (0%), compared to those involved in hunting (70%).

Partner agencies in the qualitative research generally felt the GMA was effective in undertaking compliance operations, and many reported the effectiveness of the GMA's

compliance activities had improved in recent years. However, some participants indicated they would like to see the GMA further resourced to undertake compliance activities.

*“They only have 20 or so compliance officers across the whole state so compared to other organisations like Fisheries that have hundreds. So lacks capacity there... they sort of have to target particular areas. Not a flaw with them, but the reality is they don’t have many compliance officers.”*

*“I suppose it’s always resource permitting, but obviously being out in the field a little bit more with their people but that’s obviously a resource issue.”*

Participants directly involved with enforcing compliance with the GMA in relation to both illegal hunting and protestor activity also reported positive perceptions of how the GMA worked with them. These participants provided feedback that the GMA was responsive to reports of compliance breaches and worked well with them to resolve the issue(s).

*“Their time of response is effective. Most times they’ll be there within 12 hours, and they communicate what their strategies will be to move these forest protestors on.”*

Many peak bodies/ associations in the qualitative research who were involved in hunting felt the GMA’s compliance operations had improved in the last few years, citing there had been an increase in its presence in the field.

*“They’ve been out and about and more visible, had positive interactions with our members.”*

However, many of these participants provided lower ratings because they still witnessed illegal hunting in the field and felt the GMA could increase its presence in the field further. In addition, a few participants felt the GMA’s compliance operations were focused on hunters rather than protestors.

*“Compliance has improved significantly in the last couple of years, but we still get lots of reports of illegal hunting.”*

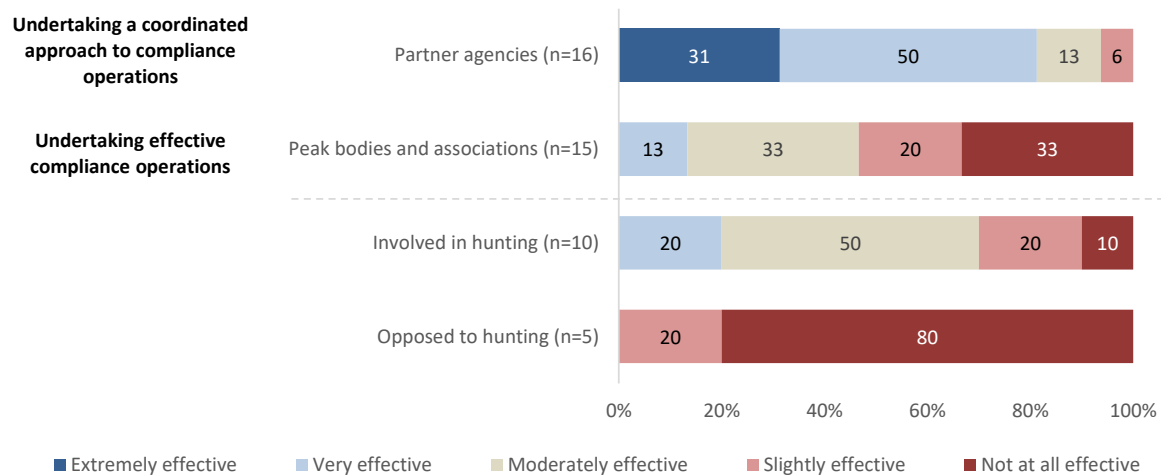
*“They’re happy to stop hunters and have a chat about compliance and licences, but we don’t see that when it comes to protesters.”*

Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting provided lower ratings in relation to compliance operations because they did not have any visibility of the GMA’s compliance operations and felt there was no evidence that they had been effective (e.g. due to low prosecutions). This feedback suggests that increasing communication about what the GMA is doing to enforce compliance and the outcomes of compliance activities will help to improve perceptions among this cohort.

*“The issue that is very prevalent every year, which is lack of successful prosecution – rescuers will collect evidence every year... but there’s a stark lack of successful prosecution.”*

*“They have a committee that sits inside the GMA that looks at the legal aspects of prosecuting. They never prosecute.”*

**Figure 23: Effectiveness in undertaking coordinated approach to/ compliance operations**  
(Base: All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations)



*Q10a. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at undertaking a coordinated approach to compliance operations?*

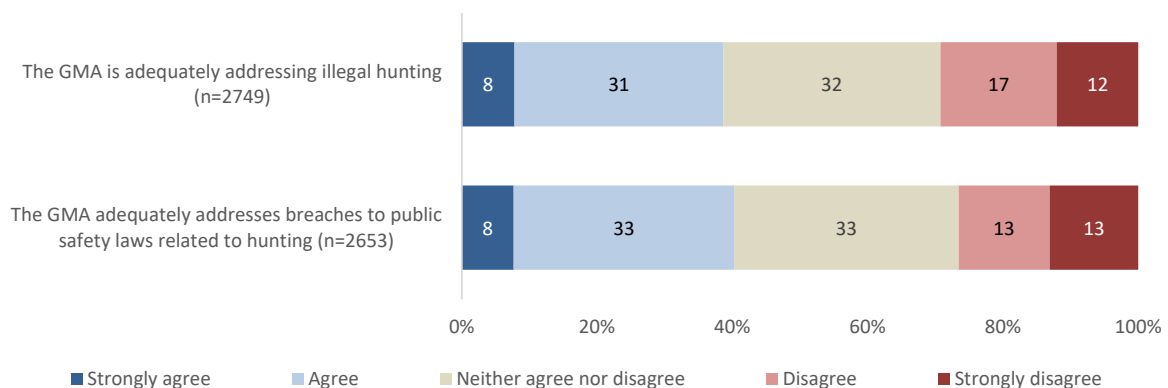
*Q14a. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at delivering effective compliance operations?*

Less than half of game licence holders agreed the GMA is adequately addressing illegal hunting (39%) and adequately addressing breaches to public safety laws related to hunting (40%).

Licence holders endorsed for game birds only (45%) were more likely to agree the GMA was adequately addressing illegal hunting, compared to those endorsed for deer only (38%) or both (35%).

Licence holders endorsed for deer only (44%) were more likely to agree the GMA adequately addresses breaches to public safety laws related to hunting, compared to those endorsed for game birds only (38%) or both (35%).

**Figure 24: Perceptions of compliance operations (game licence holders)**  
(Base: All game licence holders)



*Q20a-b. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's enforcement activities.*

When asked about whether they have any feedback or suggestions to improve compliance activities, game licence holders' most commonly provided comments related to:

- ◆ Increasing action against protestors and activists (26%);

*"I think the GMA don't enforce protestors actions for illegally entering wetlands during duck season and how protestors can continually hassle hunters undertaking duck hunting legally."*

- ◆ Increasing the presence of the GMA in the field to combat illegal hunting, especially around night time (23%) – including comments to increase the GMA's resources in this area; and

*"Just not enough GMA Officers to thoroughly enforce illegal hunting, understandably, you can't be everywhere all the time, and the high country is such a vast area. There are plenty of tracks that you guys just won't travel on. Although most illegal hunting (poaching) is on fringe country."*

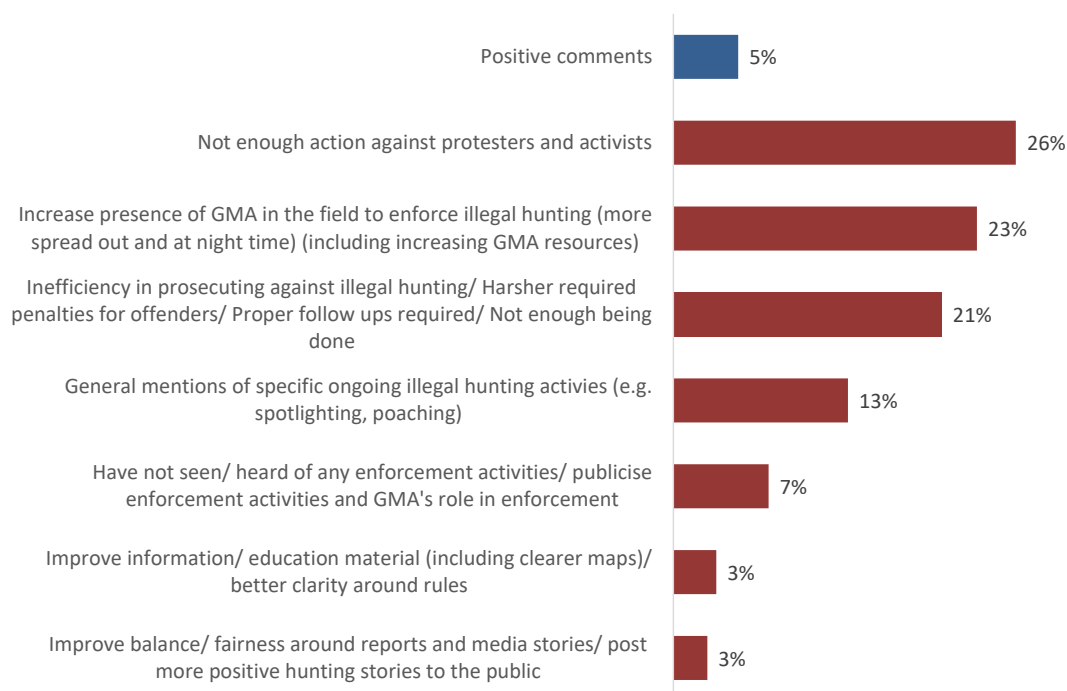
*"There are not enough game officers. I have never seen one enforcing ever. We have a lot of illegal spot lighting and shooting from vehicles in our area and it is never addressed."*

- ◆ Inefficient/ inadequate prosecution of illegal hunters (21%) – including comments that harsher penalties for illegal hunting were required.

*"They are not actively working with the real hunting community to address and stop illegal deer hunting."*

*"Not even worth reporting illegal hunting to GMA. They brush off any illegal reports and always ask for more info then say not enough info reported every time. Much better reporting direct to police."*

**Figure 25: Most frequent comments provided in relation to GMA's enforcement activities**  
(Base: All game licence holders)



*Q21. Do you have any comments about the GMA's enforcement activities? In particular, if you provided any lower rating(s) please explain what areas you feel are not being addressed. (n=1,146 valid comments provided)*

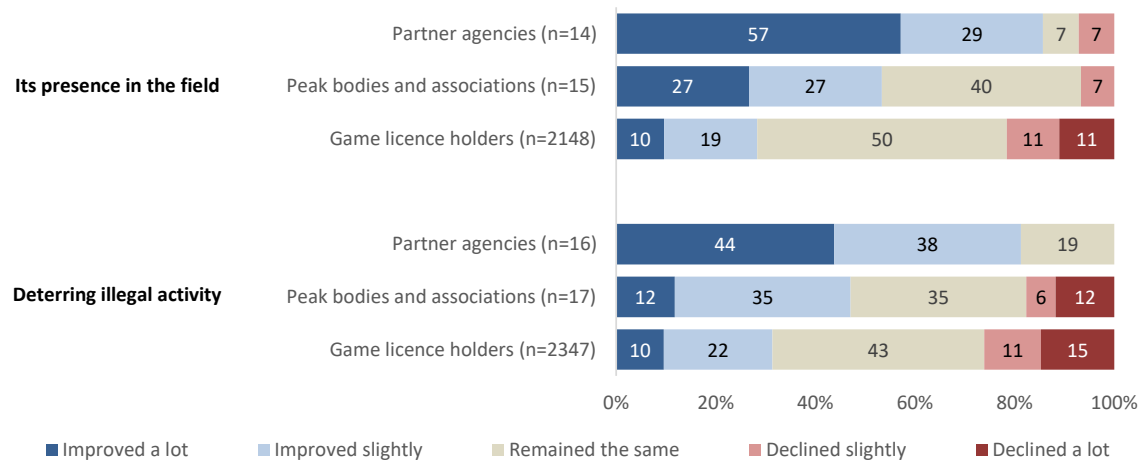
## Change in performance over time

The majority of partner agencies felt the GMA had improved in its presence in the field (86%) and deterring illegal activity (81%) in the last four years. Some participants in the qualitative research perceived this was due to increased resourcing to enforce compliance (e.g. higher number of Game Officers) and some had seen evidence of improvements in compliance activities (e.g. increased prosecutions).

Compared to partner agencies, peak bodies/ associations were less likely to feel the GMA had improved in its presence in the field (53%) and deterring illegal activity (47%). Those involved in hunting were more likely to report both had improved (60% and 70%, respectively) compared to those opposed to hunting (40% and 14%, respectively). Participants in the qualitative research who felt it had improved mainly reported this was due to increased visibility of Game Officers in the field.

Around one third of game licence holders felt the GMA had improved in its presence in the field (28%) and deterring illegal activity (31%), while around one quarter felt it had declined (22% and 26%, respectively).

**Figure 26: Perceived changes in performance in compliance activities in last four years**  
(Base: All respondents)



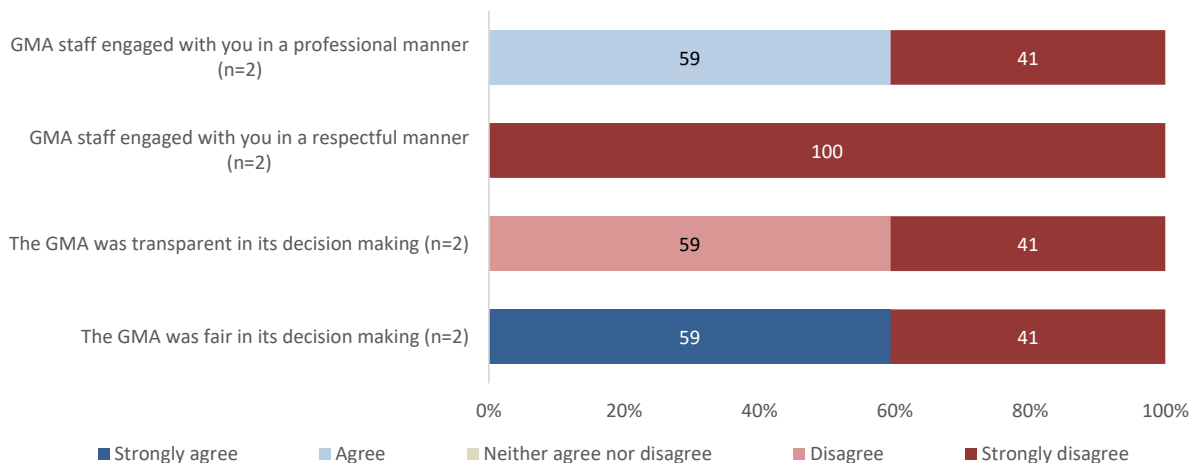
Q15e-f/Q19e-f/Q24e-f. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in...

## Hunting offences

Only two respondents (less than 1% of game licence holders) indicated they had been investigated by the GMA for a hunting offence in the past 12 months.

Those who had been investigated reported generally negative perceptions of the GMA staff involved and the GMA's decision making in their case.

**Figure 27: Perceptions of improvement in compliance activities in last four years**  
(Base: Game licence holders investigated for a hunting offence in past 12 months)



Q19a-d. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your interactions with GMA staff during the investigation(s).

## VIII. Advice and research

### Performance indicators

Partner agencies generally reported positive perceptions of the GMA's advice and research (80.7ip), while peak bodies/ associations overall reported negative perceptions (43.0ip). On average, peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting provide neutral ratings (53.3ip) while those opposed to hunting provided negative ratings (28.3ip).

**Table 7: Advice index score**  
(Base: All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations)

Advice index  Index score = Average across survey respondents of questions relating to advice and research; Range [0,100]	Stakeholder group	Index score
	Partner agencies (n=23)	80.7ip
	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=17)	43.0ip
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	53.3ip
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	28.3ip

Most partner agencies (94%) felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective at managing game seasons in line with scientific evidence. Around one quarter (24%) of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective. Those involved in hunting reported more positive perceptions (40%) than those opposed to hunting (none – 0%).

**Table 8: Proportion of stakeholders who felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective at managing game seasons in line with scientific evidence**  
(Base: All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations)

% that felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective at managing game seasons in line with scientific evidence	Stakeholder group	Percentage
	Partner agencies (n=18)	94%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=17)	24%
	♦ Involved in hunting (n=10)	40%
	♦ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	0%



Most partner agencies (87%) agreed that GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues.

**Table 9: Proportion of partner agencies who agree GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues**

(Base: All partner agencies)

% of partner agencies who agree the GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues	Stakeholder group	Percentage
	Partner agencies (n=23)	87%

The majority of partner agencies (82%) and peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting (78%) agreed the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities. In contrast, no peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting (0%) felt the GMA was neutral and unbiased.

38% of game licence holders overall felt the GMA was neutral and unbiased. Those endorsed for deer only (48%) were more likely to agree with this statement than those endorsed for game birds only (29%) or both (27%).

**Table 10: Proportion of stakeholders who agree the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities**

(Base: All respondents)

% of stakeholders who agree the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities	Stakeholder group	Percentage
	Partner agencies (n=22)	82%
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	44%
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=9)	78%
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	0%
	Game licence holders (n=3,087)	38%
	◆ Deer only (n=1,793)	48%
	◆ Game Birds only (n=354)	29%
	◆ Both (n=915)	27%

## Perceptions of the GMA's advice and research

Most partner agencies agreed with all statements about the GMA's policy advice and research.

Most partner agency participants in the qualitative research reported:

- ◆ The GMA and its staff had a high level of expertise about game management – hence their advice was valued and trusted by their organisation;

*"You have people there that have so much knowledge within in the space it's actually quite mind boggling."*

- ◆ The GMA clearly communicated policy advice and research;

*"For instance with duck hunting, they provide recommendations with the Minister on what they should be. It's always accompanied by very detailed briefing. This year there were two briefings because new data came through. They have a really clear process, it's all set out on the website – they're very transparent about that. It's all very effective, the advice they give to government is very comprehensive."*

- ◆ The GMA adequately consulted with them to inform policy advice.

*"We bring different opinions to the table and have very constructive conversations. We work through our differences."*

However, a few participants provided suggestions for improvement in relation to:

- ◆ Ensuring decisions are made with appropriate consideration of economic, social and environmental factors – a few participants felt some of the GMA's decisions were made to 'keep the hunters happy'; and

- These participants felt this was more so at the Board level.

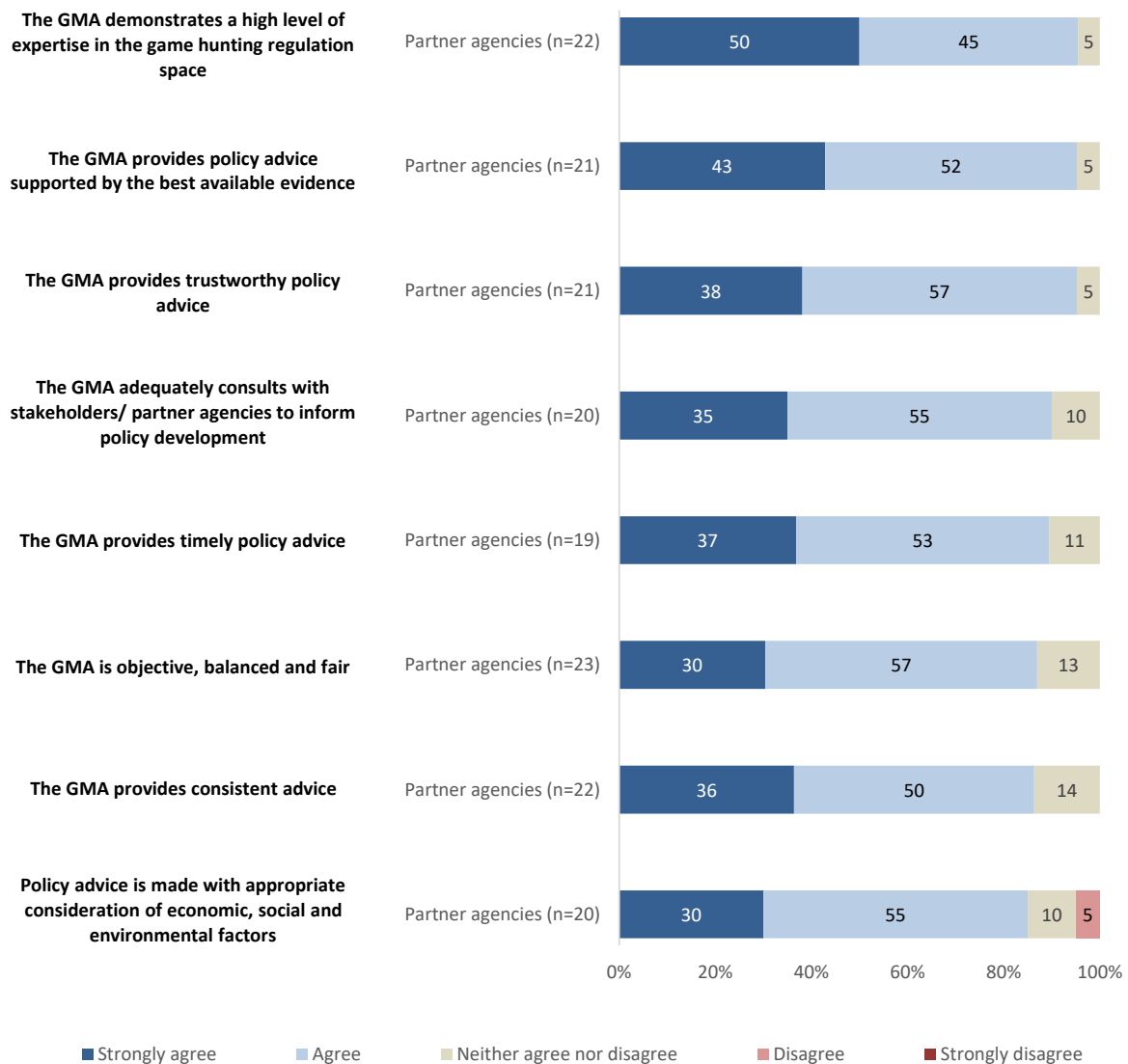
*"The stakeholder influence around things like seasons is the area where I think they let themselves down – this is predominantly driven at the Board level, not the CEO/ Director level. It's the Board's influence on the organisation."*

- ◆ The quality of the data used to inform policy advice could be improved – particularly in relation to waterfowl counting;

- However, participants acknowledged that the GMA was shifting its approach to an adaptive harvest model, which was positive.

*"I know they are using the best data they have at the time. No one thinks it's perfect, we know there's gaps in all sorts of data across this space. I've always been confident that they are using the best they have during that time. I'm confident they are not trying to hide anything, just using what they've got."*

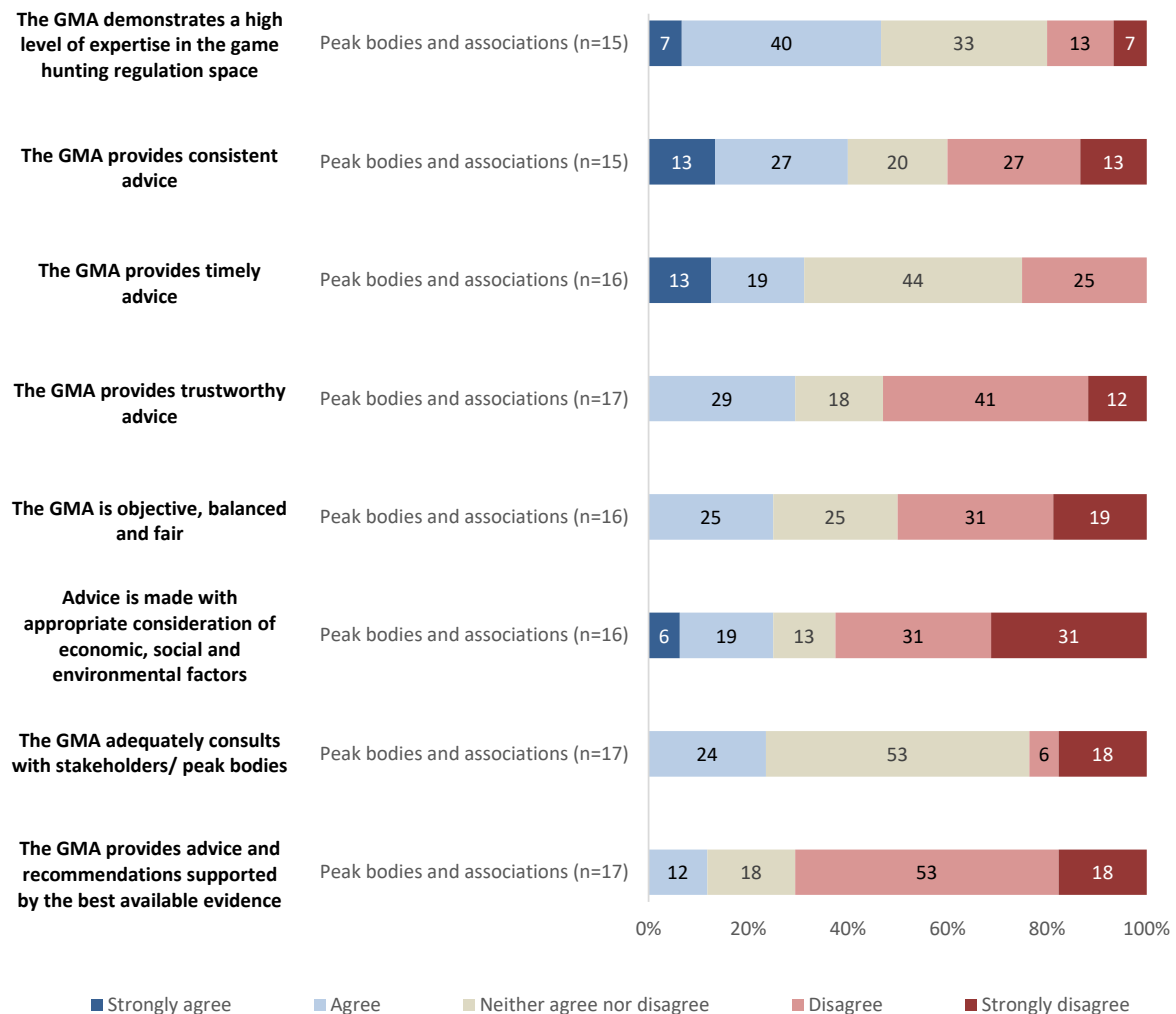
**Figure 28: Perceptions of the GMA's policy advice and research – partner agencies**  
(Base: All partner agencies)



Q11a-h. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's policy advice and research.

Peak bodies/ associations provided less positive ratings for all aspects related to advice and research compared to partner agencies. Respondents were most likely to agree the GMA demonstrates a high level of expertise in the game hunting regulation space (47%) and least likely to agree the GMA provides advice and recommendations supported by the best available evidence (12%).

**Figure 29: Perceptions of the GMA's advice and research – peak bodies/ associations**  
(Base: All peak bodies/ associations)



Q15a-h. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's advice and research.

Peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting provided more positive ratings for all aspects of advice and research compared to those opposed to hunting.

Despite differences in overall ratings, feedback on the GMA's advice and research was similar among participants in the qualitative research involved and opposed to hunting. Feedback most commonly related to:

- ◆ Advice not being made with appropriate consideration of economic, social and environmental factors;
  - Some participants involved in hunting felt decisions were made for political reasons;

*"I think that the decisions made by the GMA are politically driven, they have a minister to answer to and numerous stakeholders to appease and at the end of the day, the government*

*needs votes to stay in place. There's some fears about the bias there and what side of the argument they end up on from time-to-time."*

- In contrast, those opposed to hunting tended to feel too much consideration was given to 'keep the hunters happy'; and

*"We don't think economic considerations, for example, have been properly taken into account. Some of the surveys have been quite misleading in regard to whether it adds to the economy. We think it's the opposite, it limits tourism opportunities, for people who want to go into the wetlands and see wildlife. We think they don't consider that element adequately either."*

- ◆ The credibility of data used to provide advice – some participants reported they were not confident in the GMA's data (e.g. data was outdated, low quality, contradictory);
  - Some participants provided an example that the recommendation for duck season was changed as new data was received.

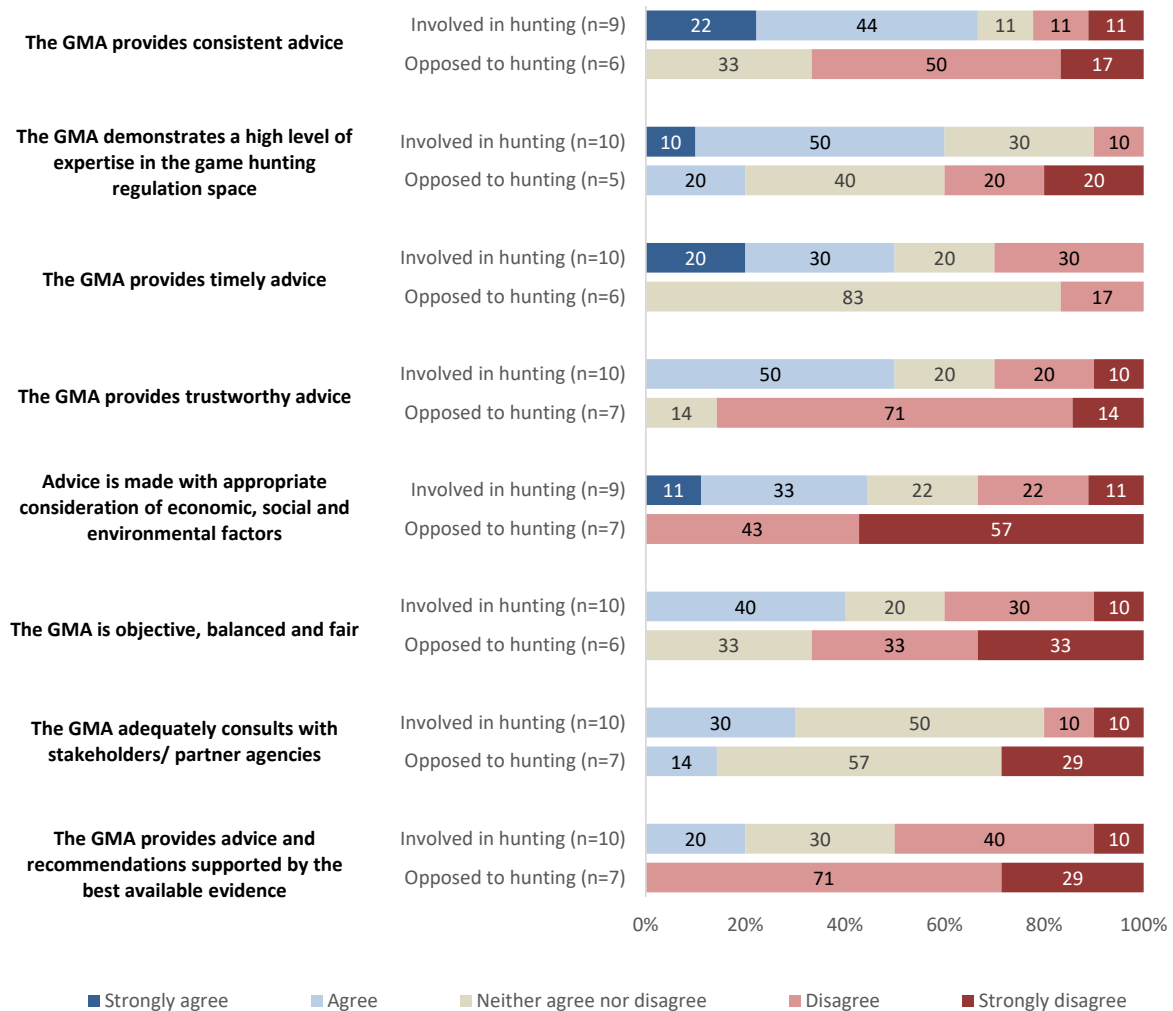
*"No evidence found could support regulatory information about changing duck seasons – but they reduced the season and take limit, then 2 months later their own research contradicted that original stance. This had a massive hit to their reputation and hurt them across all sectors, from pro-hunters to anti-hunters."*

*"Don't have confidence in GMA information on duck hunting and duck breeding issues – changed suddenly at short notice without any notification, seemed to be changed just to align with the GMA's position on extending the hunting season."*

*"There seems to be a significant void in their knowledge base. They tend not to understand how things works and not up to speed about the changes in the last 10 years."*

**Figure 30: Perceptions of the GMA's advice and research by organisation type – peak bodies/ associations**

(Base: All peak bodies/ associations)



Q15a-h. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's advice and research.

Nearly all (94%) partner agencies felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective in managing game seasons in line with scientific advice/ evidence. While most participants in the qualitative research were positive, some felt the data used to manage game seasons could be improved. This was particularly in relation to data around duck hunting. However, these participants acknowledged that the GMA was improving the research and data available.

*"Part of the problem with duck hunting is the data available to inform decisions. We don't have great data in the duck hunting space. Therefore there's a lot of subjectivity in terms of making decisions. Since we have poor data, we make decisions based on judgment. It's a judgment call."*

Around one quarter (24%) of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA was at least 'moderately' effective in providing recommendations on game seasons in line with scientific advice and evidence. Organisations involved in hunting (40%) provided more positive ratings compared to those opposed to hunting (0%).

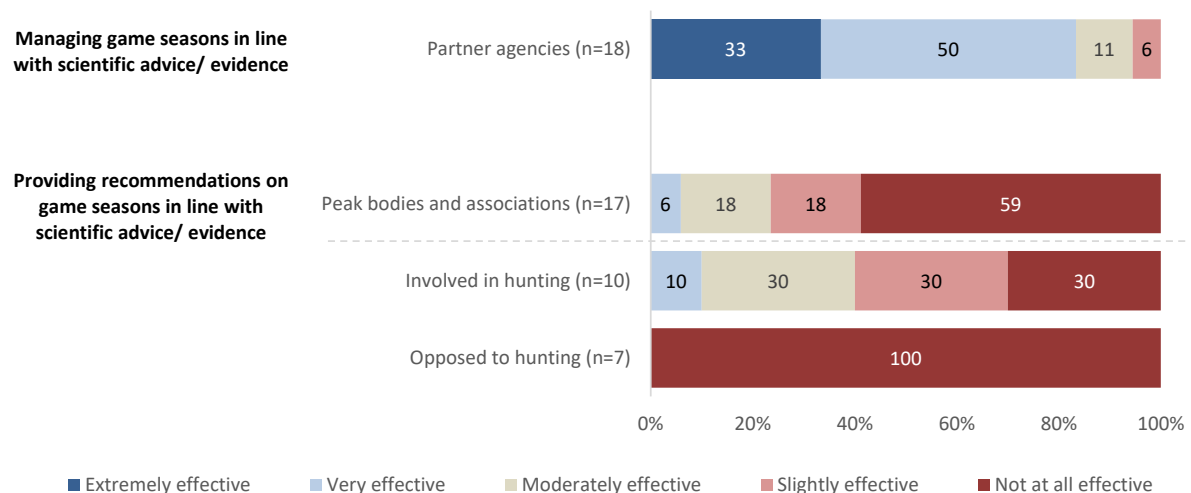
Many participants in the qualitative research from both organisations involved in and opposed to hunting reported perceptions that the GMA's decisions around duck hunting season were not made in line with scientific evidence/ research. A few participants felt that the scientific evidence was being overridden by political or social motives.

*"We're all about sustainability and have supported reduced seasons and bag limits when there's less duck available, but in better seasons the GMA has taken the same position with no demonstrable science to back it up."*

*"The science might be correct but you're not sure what the Board's going to do. The science might find that there are no certain species available but the Board might say we're gonna have a hunting season anyway."*

These participants indicated they would appreciate increased communication and transparency around how scientific evidence has informed decisions made around game seasons.

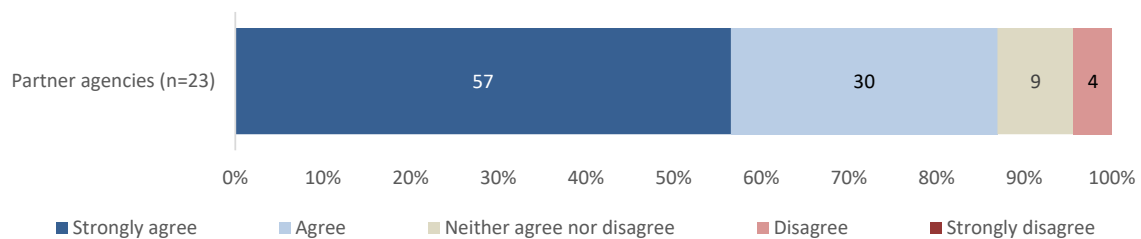
**Figure 31: Perceptions of the GMA's effectiveness in managing/ providing recommendations on game seasons in line with scientific advice/ research**  
(Base: All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations)



Q10e/ Q14c. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

Most partner agencies (87%) felt the GMA demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues when engaging with their organisation in the past 12 months. This reflected qualitative feedback from partner agencies that GMA staff have a high level of expertise in game management.

**Figure 32: Perceptions of the GMA's capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues**  
(Base: All partner agencies)



*Q7f. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months: GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues.*

## Perceptions of the GMA as neutral and unbiased

The majority of partner agencies (82%) agreed the GMA was neutral and unbiased in delivering on its responsibilities. Participants in the qualitative research who agreed most commonly reported this was because:

- ◆ They felt the GMA was addressing illegal activity on both sides (i.e. hunters and protestors);
- ◆ Decisions were made with appropriate consideration of all factors; and
- ◆ Advice and research is presently objectively.

*“With their monitoring program it’s quite scientific. It’s just written in an objective manner, not an analysis of whether you should have it. It doesn’t go into the policy or political realms.”*

Partner agencies in the qualitative research who did not agree the GMA was neutral and unbiased felt the GMA tended to make decisions in favour of hunters.

Less than half (44%) of peak bodies/ associations felt the GMA was neutral and unbiased. Organisations involved in hunting (78%) were more likely to agree with this statement than those opposed to hunting (0%). Most participants in the qualitative research involved in hunting who agreed the GMA was neutral and unbiased indicated this was because they did not perceive the GMA to be making decisions in favour of hunters, linked to their understanding that promoting hunting was not part of the GMA's role.

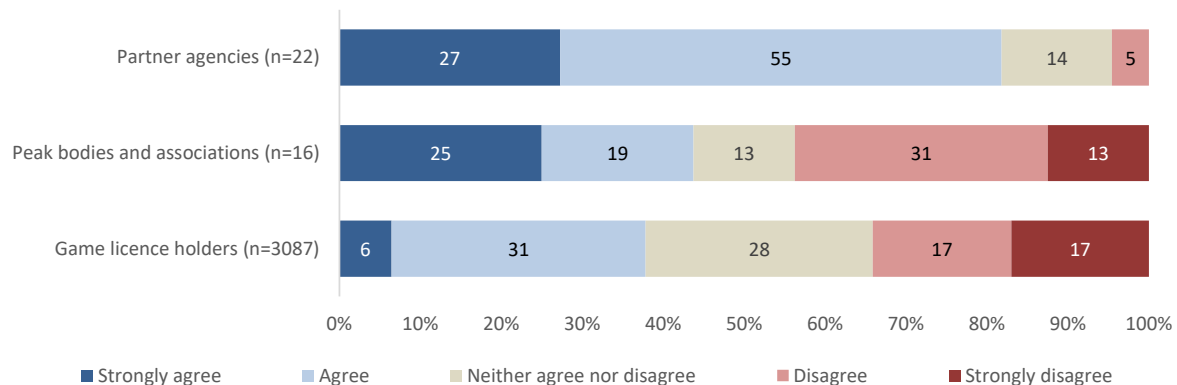
Among those opposed to hunting, all participants perceived the GMA to make decisions in favour of hunters. These participants also felt that having staff within the GMA who were also hunters created a conflict of interest.



*“There are people within GMA who are regulated hunters. This is concerning. Creates conflict of interest and mistrust.”*

*“There are strong pro-shooting advocates on their Board. That is problematic because of conflict of interest. They can have experts consulting with them, but to have decision makers on their Board that are seasoned shooters and supporters is just wrong.”*

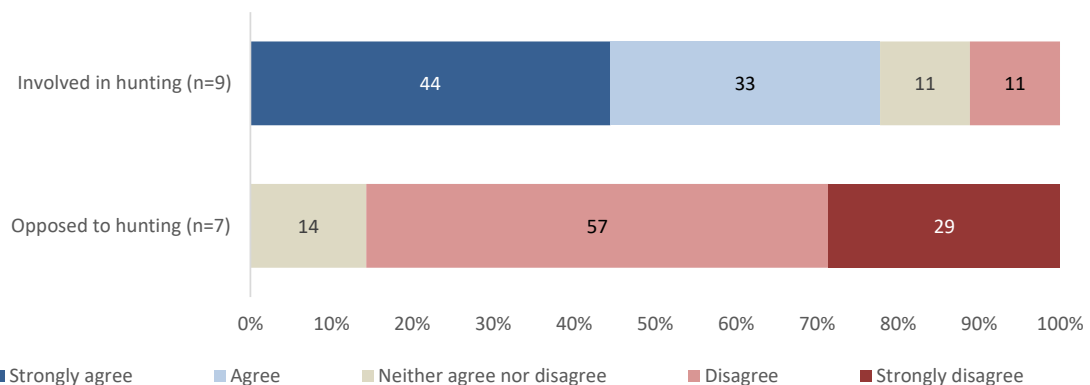
**Figure 33: Perceptions of the GMA as neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q13/Q17. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities.

Q22b. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA: The GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities.

**Figure 34: Agreement the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities by organisation type – peak bodies/ associations**  
(Base: All peak bodies/ associations)

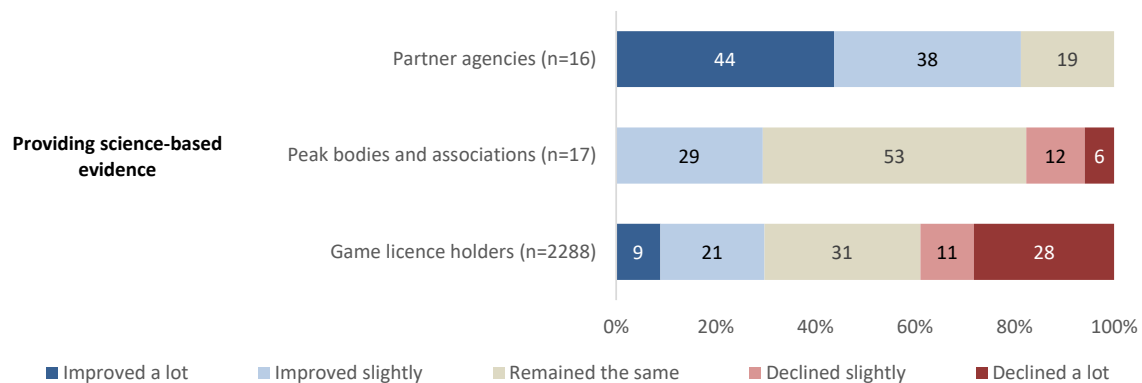


Q17. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities.

## Change in performance over time

The majority of partner agencies (81%) felt the GMA's performance had improved in providing science-based evidence in the last four years. A similar proportion of peak bodies/associations (29%) and game licence holders (30%) felt the GMA's performance had improved. However, a greater proportion of game licence holders (39%) felt it had declined in the last four years.

**Figure 35: Perceived changes in the GMA's performance in providing science-based evidence in the last four years**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q15a/Q19a/Q24a. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in: Providing science-based evidence.

## IX. Education resources

### Performance indicators

Partner agencies had generally positive perceptions (73.4ip) of the GMA's education resources.

**Table 11: Education index score**  
(Base: All partner agencies)

Education index	Stakeholder group	Index score
Index score = Average across survey respondents of questions relating to education; Range [0,100]	Partner agencies (n=16)	73.4ip

Please note the education index for partner agencies is not directly comparable with peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders, as partner agencies were not asked the same question set about education resources.

Peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting provided mostly positive to neutral assessments (64.6ip) of the education resources, while those opposed to hunting supplied negative ratings overall (29.4ip). Game licence holders as a group were fairly positive about the resources (68.6ip), similar to their representative organisations – those endorsed to hunt deer only were the most positive in their perceptions of GMA education materials (72.9ip).

**Table 12: Education index score**  
(Base: All peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders)

Education index  Index score = Average across survey respondents of questions relating to education; Range [0,100]	Peak bodies/ associations overall (n=17)	50.1ip
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=10)	64.6ip
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=7)	29.4ip
	Game licence holders (n=2,144)	68.6ip
	◆ Deer only (n=1,265)	72.9ip
	◆ Game Birds only (n=186)	64.1ip
	◆ Both (n=636)	64.2ip

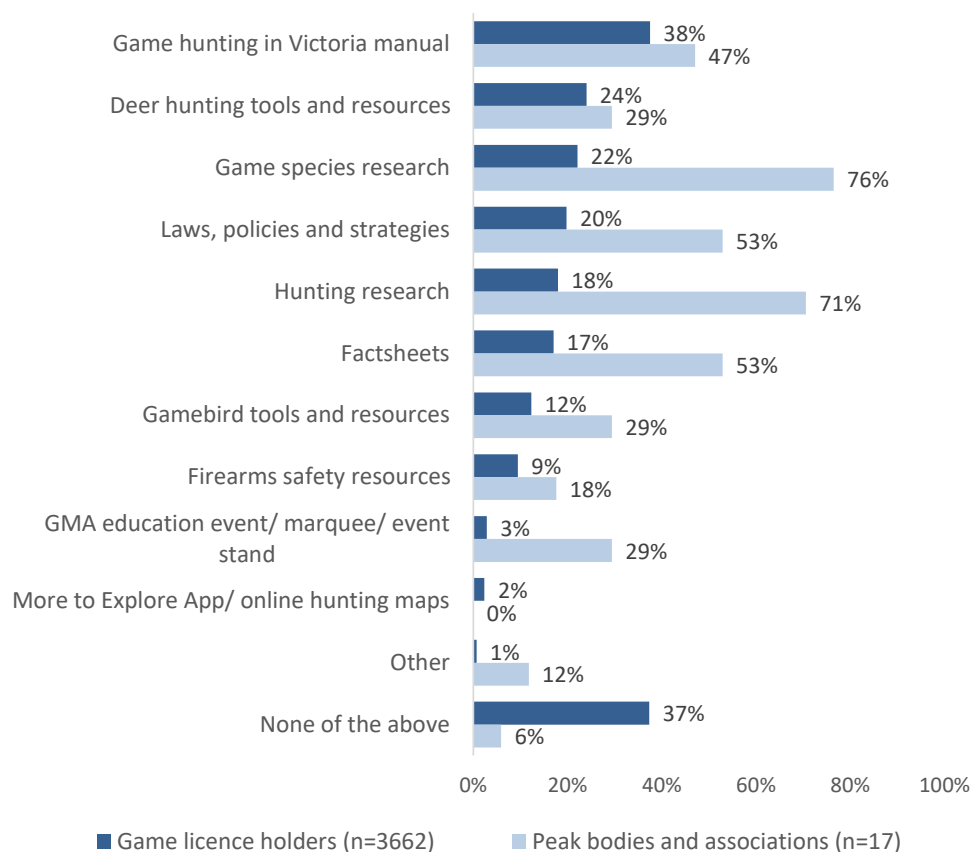
## Usage of education resources

Use of the GMA's education resources in the previous 12 months was nearly universal among peak bodies/ associations (94% had accessed at least one type), including more than half that had used some of the more technical materials such as:

- ◆ Game species research (76%);
- ◆ Hunting research (71%); and
- ◆ Laws, policies and strategy documents (53%).

Use of the resources was less intensive among game licence holders, although still quite widespread (63% had accessed at least one type). Greater usage was recorded among the practical materials targeted at this group, such as the *Game Hunting in Victoria* manual (38%), deer hunting tools/ resources (24% overall, 30% of those endorsed to hunt deer) and gamebird tools/ resources (12% overall, 21% of those endorsed to hunt gamebirds).

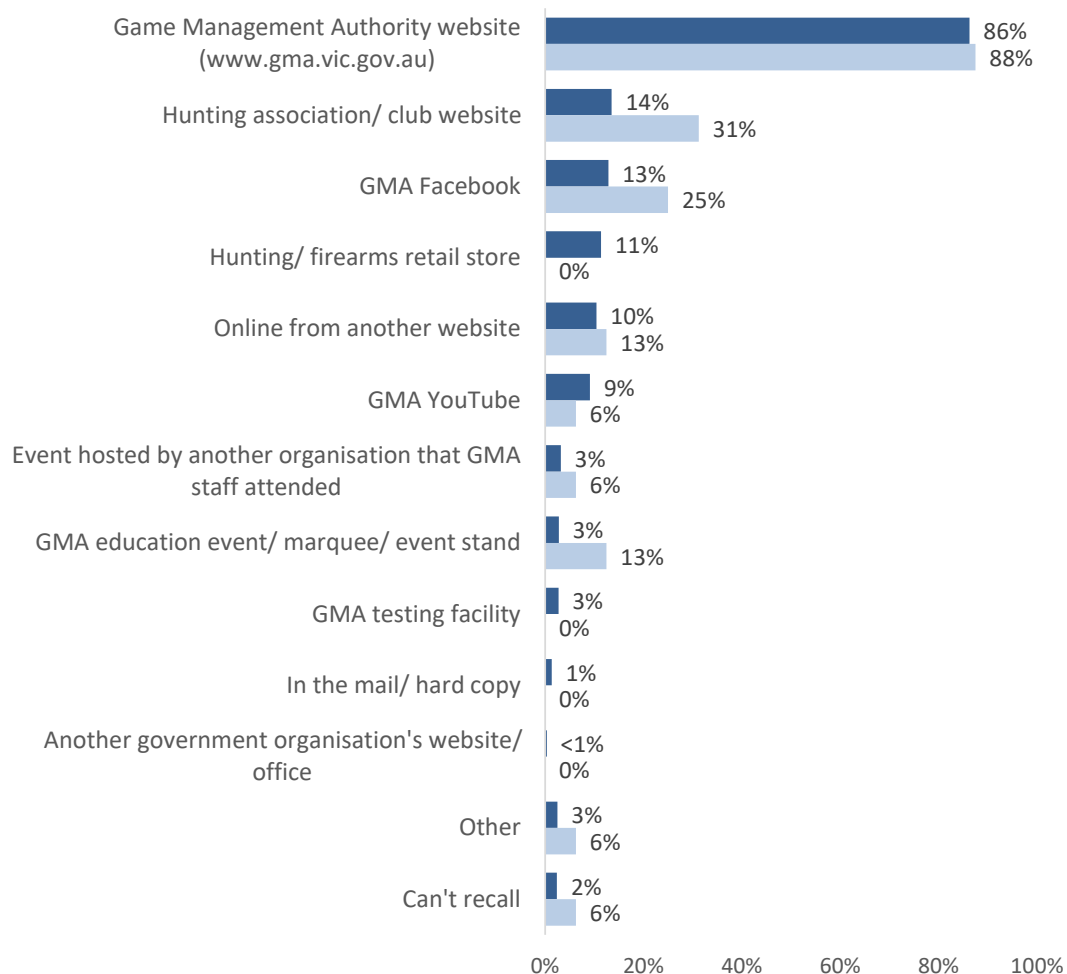
**Figure 36: Usage of the GMA's education resources**  
(Base: All peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders)



Q11/Q10. Have you accessed/ used any of the following education resources from the GMA in the past 12 months?

For both peak bodies/ associations (88%) and game licence holders (86%), the GMA's education resources were mainly accessed through the GMA website, with a range of other online channels also identified but by much smaller proportions. The most common in-person methods of accessing materials were through a GMA event/ marquee/ stand for peak organisations (13%) and through a retail store for game licence holders (11%).

**Figure 37: Where accessed the GMA's education resources**  
(Base: Respondents who had accessed education resources in last 12 months)



■ Game licence holders (n=2324)

■ Peak bodies and associations (n=16)

Q12/Q11. Where did you access/ obtain the GMA's education resources?

Some peak body stakeholders in the qualitative research, both those involved in and those opposed to hunting, felt that education resources relied too much on passive delivery and should be delivered more actively, perhaps in partnership with hunting organisations. Benefits were also identified in making familiarity with some of the information mandatory.

*"The GMA's role is to identify the best way to get key information across, in order to provide a safe environment for everyone involved. There is limited visibility on how well this is done."*

*"There needs to be a greater engagement with hunters when it comes to training, not only relying on information seeking among those that will look for it."*

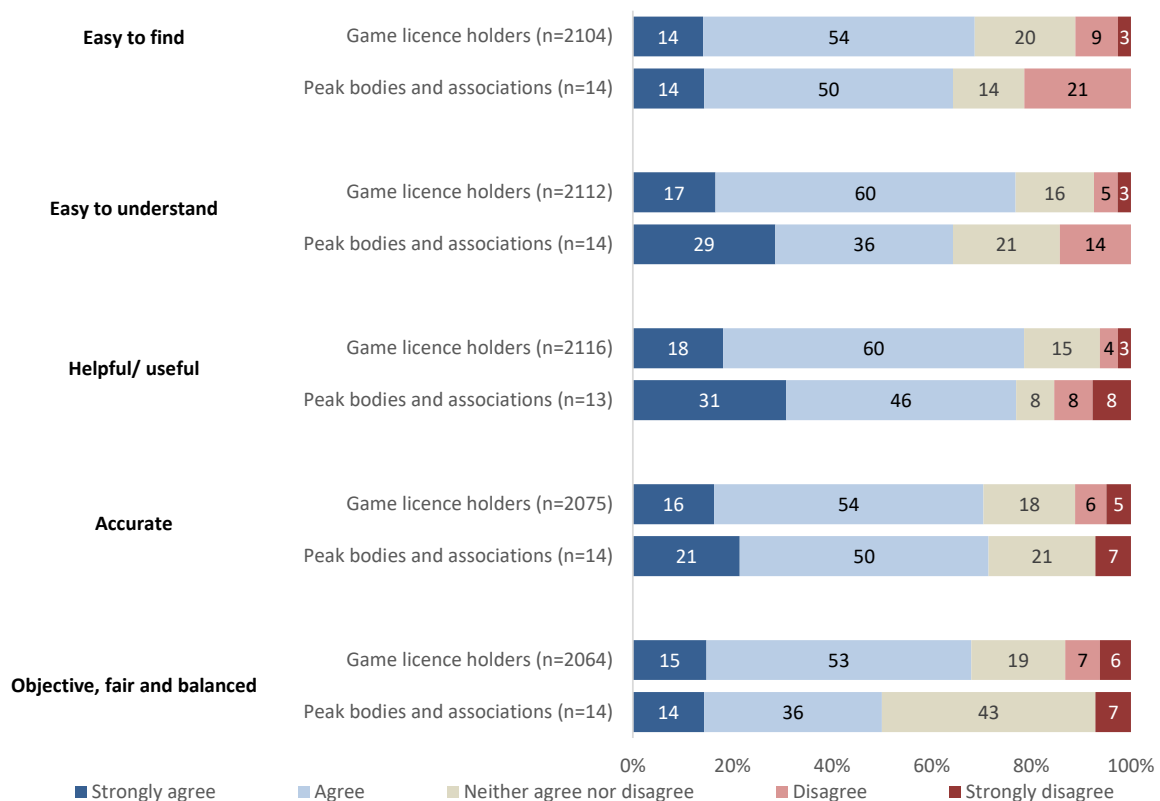
## Perceptions of education resources

Perceptions of the GMA's education resources were positive on balance, with around one fifth or significantly less considering that the criteria were not met. Over two thirds of these two stakeholder groups considered that the information provided through these resources was:

- ◆ Helpful/ useful (peak organisations - 77%, licence holders – 79%); and
- ◆ Accurate (peak organisations - 71%, licence holders – 70%).

Agreement was somewhat lower that the information presented was objective, fair and balanced (peak organisations - 50%, licence holders – 68%), however, most other assessments for this aspect were neutral rather than negative.

**Figure 38: Perceptions of the GMA's education resources**  
(Base: Respondents who had accessed education resources in last 12 months)



Q13a-e/Q12a-e. Thinking about the GMA education resources you have used or events you have attended in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the information provided was...

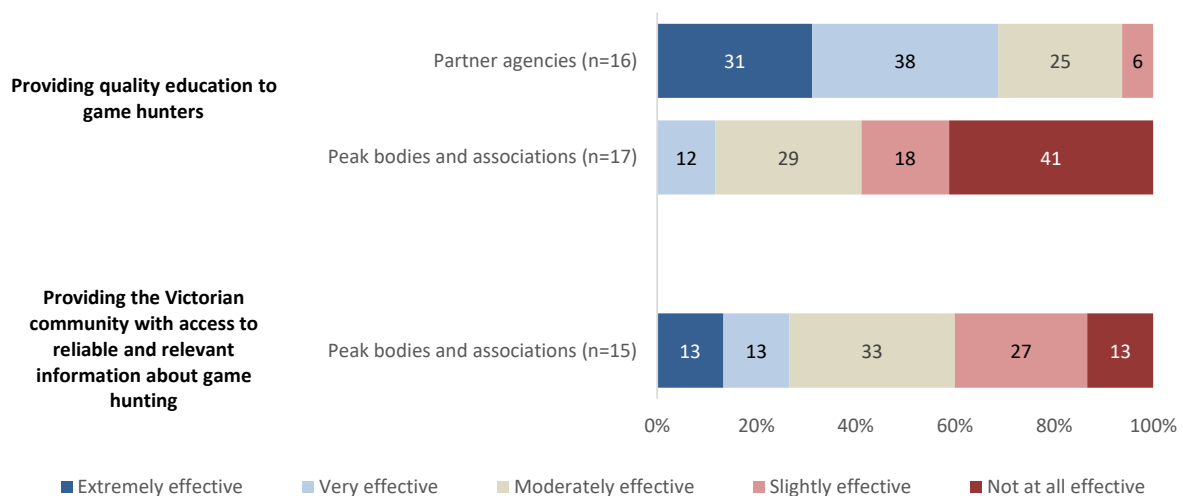
Some peak body stakeholders flagged GMA resources they considered to be of particularly high quality, such as the *Game Hunting in Victoria* manual and *More To Explore* app (which provides access to dynamic hunting maps). However, these stakeholders misattributed the management of the *More to Explore* app to GMA, which although available on the GMA's

website is actually managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Partner agencies generally had positive perceptions of the GMA's effectiveness in providing quality education to game hunters (94% rated this as at least 'moderately effective'), while peak bodies/ associations were much less positive (41% rated as 'not at all effective').

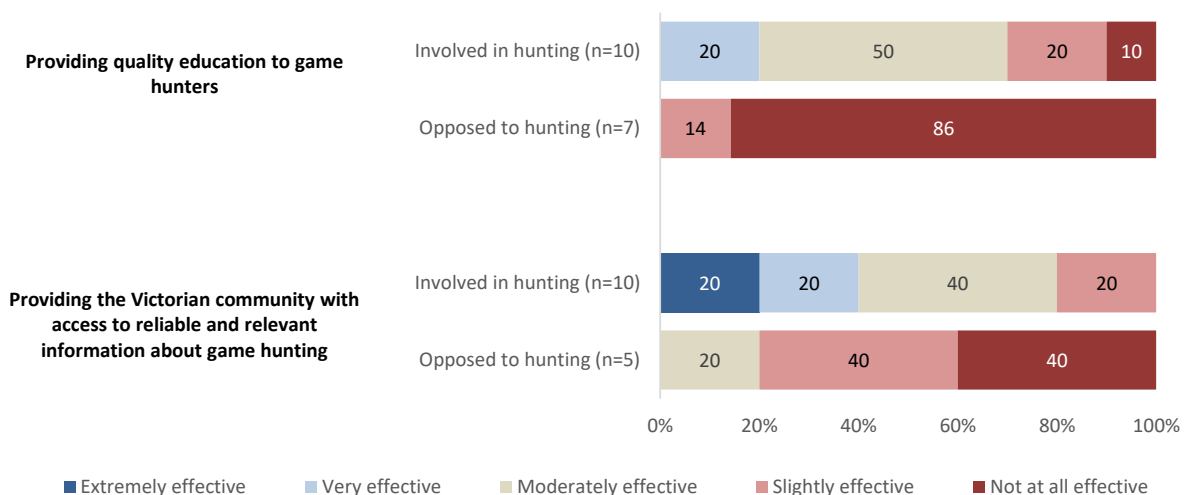
Additionally, peak bodies/ associations were most likely to feel that provision of community access to reliable and relevant information about game hunting was only 'moderate effective' (33%) or 'slightly effective' (27%).

**Figure 39: Perceptions of the GMA in delivering education to the community**  
(Base: All partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations)



Q10c/Q14b&Q14d. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

**Figure 40: Perceptions of the GMA in delivering education to the community by organisation type – peak bodies/ associations**  
(Base: All peak bodies/ associations)



Q14b&Q14d. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

From the qualitative interviews it was apparent that most peak body stakeholders felt the education materials were of sufficient quality, and it was the delivery of training and/ or requirements for testing that were more commonly seen to be lacking. The latter was mainly identified by peak bodies opposed to hunting; however, peak bodies involved in hunting were also somewhat critical of the GMA's performance in delivering education to the community.

*"We know better than anyone the education and testing that our members need, but the GMA is reluctant to work with us, or even an independent third party, to deliver this. It comes down to the perception of bias, even though our interests are 95% aligned with the GMA's."*

*"From what we see in the field it shows that too many hunters are missing key information, not because it isn't available, but because they aren't required to know it."*

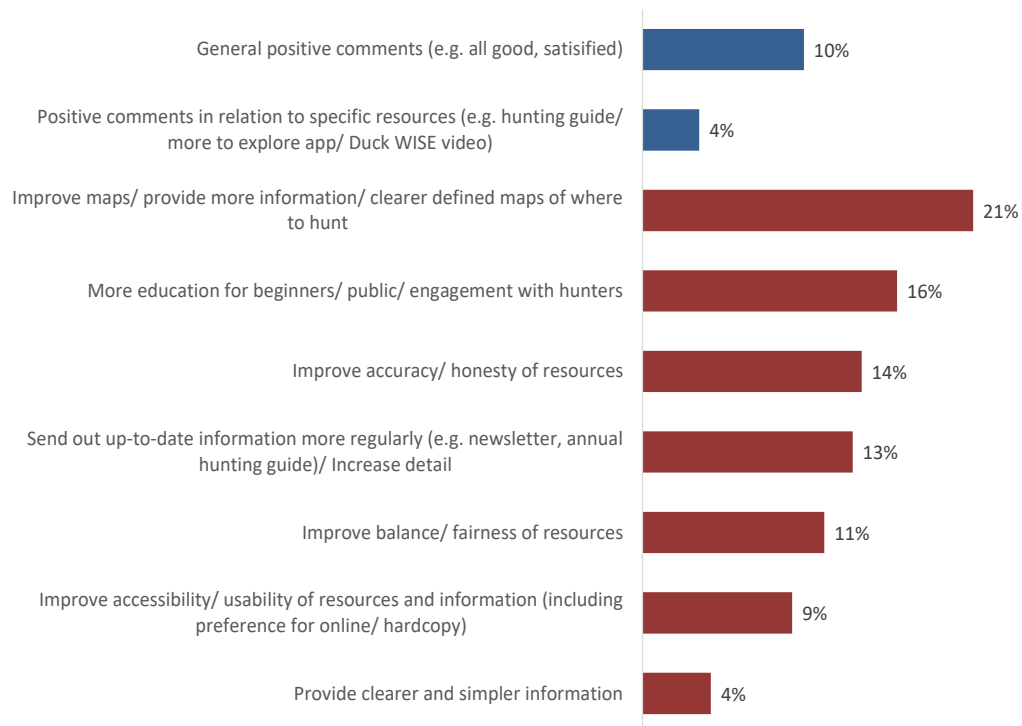
Among game licence holders who provided a comment relating to GMA's education resources, one tenth (10%) provided a generally positive comment indicating that they were satisfied with this area, and a small proportion (4%) also provided comments related to specific GMA resources such as the hunting guide and more-to-explore app. The most comment suggestion for improvement related to improving maps/ providing clearer defined maps of where to hunt<sup>1</sup> and in general, providing more information (21%). Other suggestions for improvement included providing more education for beginner hunters and the public, as well as improving engagement with hunters (16%), and improving the accuracy/ honesty of resources (14%).

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<sup>1</sup> Please note hunting maps are available on the GMA's website but are managed by DELWP.



**Figure 41: Comments relating to GMA's education resources**  
(Base: All game licence holders, n=859)

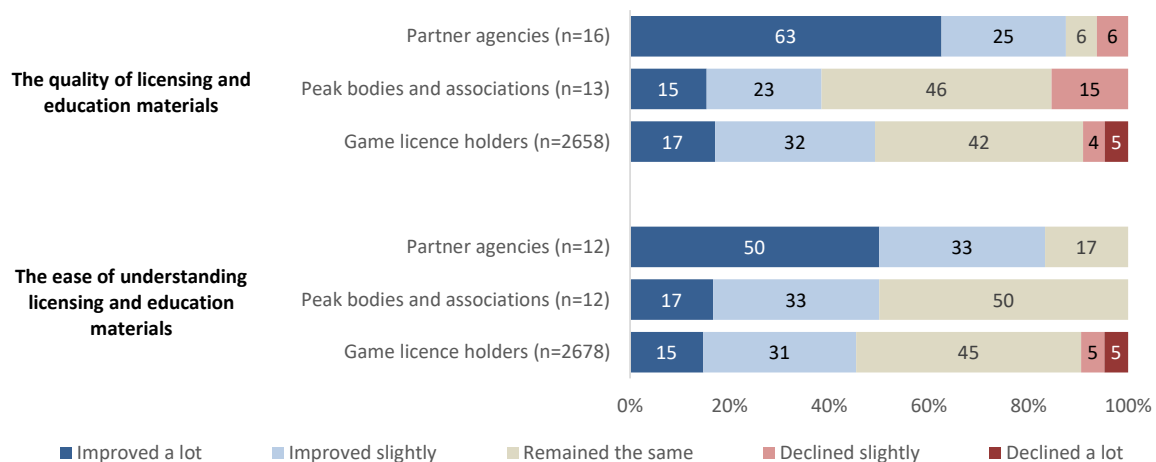


*Q14. Do you have any feedback on the GMA's education resources, or suggestions for information or resources you think the GMA should provide more of?*

## Change in performance over time

Stakeholders were much more likely to consider that the quality and ease of understanding the GMA's licensing and education materials has improved in the last four years, rather than declined. Partner agencies were particularly positive – at least half (50%-63%) felt these improvements had been by 'a lot'. In contrast, around one in ten (9%) game licence holders felt that performance in these areas had declined.

**Figure 42: Perceived changes in the GMA's licensing and education materials in the last four years**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q15c-d/Q19c-d/Q24c-d. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in...

Comments from some stakeholders in relation to the education materials reflected the improvements recognised by the survey results above, as well as broad improvements they recognised with the GMA's direction and approach.

*"Over the past couple of years we've noticed an improvement in the materials they're putting out. The maps are a prime example. Not only that, but their leadership has also really stepped up."*

*"I can't fault the quality of materials that they produce for hunters. Top notch really."*

## X. Impact of GMA's work

### Performance Indicators

On average, partner agencies provided positive ratings in relation to the GMA's impact in improving sustainable and lawful and responsible hunting practices (71.1ip). Peak bodies/ associations (33.6ip) and game licence holders (39.8ip) provided negative ratings on balance.

**Table 13: Impact index score**  
(Base: All respondents)

<b>Impact index</b>  Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures; Range [0,100]	<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Index score</b>
	Partner agencies (n=16)	71.1
	Peak bodies/ associations (n=16)	33.6
	◆ Involved in hunting (n=10)	47.5
	◆ Opposed to hunting (n=6)	10.4
	Game licence holders (n=2,615)	39.8
	◆ Deer only (n=1,459)	47.1
	◆ Game Birds only (n=306)	32.8
	◆ Both (n=831)	33.6

The majority of game licence holders (68%) agreed the GMA's services assist them to be a lawful and responsible hunter. Those endorsed to hunt deer only were most likely to agree (77%), compared to those endorsed for game birds only (56%) or both (60%).

**Table 14: Proportion of game licence holders who agree the GMA's services assist them to be a lawful and responsible hunter**  
(Base: All game licence holders)

% of game licence holders who agree the GMA's services assist them to be a lawful and responsible hunter	<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Game licence holders (n=3,425)	68%
	◆ Deer only (n=2,071)	77%
	◆ Game Birds only (n=360)	56%
	◆ Both (n=968)	60%

### Overall perceptions of the impact of the GMA's work

Overall all (100%) partner agencies felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving sustainable hunting practices in the past 12 months.

Only two fifths of peak bodies/ associations (40%) felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving sustainable hunting practices in the past 12 months.

Organisations involved in hunting provided more positive ratings (56%) compared to those opposed to hunting (17%).

Participants in the qualitative research who provided lower ratings for the GMA's effectiveness in improving sustainable hunting practices (partner agencies and peak bodies/associations alike) indicated this was because:

- ◆ They perceived decisions (particularly around duck hunting) were not made in line with scientific evidence;

*"According to the Eastern Australian Waterbird Survey, with climate change, ducks are decreasing. Native waterbird numbers have decreased by 90%, yet even when we had shocking bushfires, where many native animals died, the duck shooting season still goes ahead."*

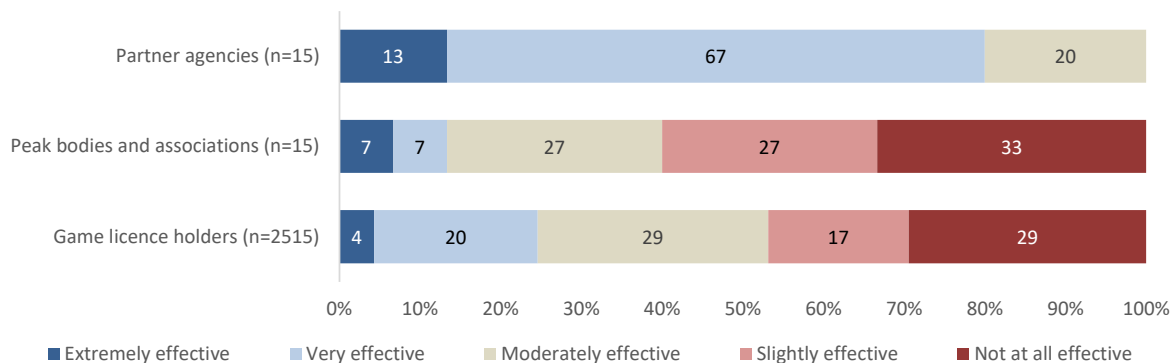
*"NSW Dept of Industries provides a survey every year, which is something they could do – the GMA said they'd do it but not use that information to base their decisions on. There were all these things they said they couldn't do, which put into question the validity of the process. Then once they did do some work with the evidence found with the Arthur Rylah Institute it contradicted their original position. Seems like they're going backwards when they had a chance to go forwards."*

- ◆ They had not seen evidence that the GMA had made any impact in improving sustainable hunting practices – these participants felt the GMA could communicate more about its achievements in this space.

*"We have no evidence they have been at all effective around sustainability or any impact... They need to provide a clear narrative on what problems they are trying to solve and how to achieve what they see success should look like."*

Just over half (53%) of game licence holders felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving sustainable hunting practices in the past 12 months. Those endorsed for deer only reported the most positive perceptions (67%) compared to those endorsed for game birds only (39%) or both (42%).

**Figure 43: GMA's impact in improving sustainable hunting practices**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q14b/Q18b/Q23b. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at improving sustainable hunting practices

Nearly all (93%) partner agencies felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices in the past 12 months.

Less than half of peak bodies/ associations (43%) felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices in the past 12 months. Organisations involved in hunting provided more positive ratings (56%) compared to those opposed to hunting (20%).

Participants in the qualitative research who provided lower ratings for the GMA's effectiveness in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices (partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations alike) indicated this was because:

- ◆ They perceived the GMA to have limited resources to undertake compliance activities;

*"They said about 12 months ago they had plenty of resources, but then were relying on Parks Victoria or VicPol to help them."*

- ◆ They felt the GMA's compliance operations were not conducted efficiently;

*"GMA needs photographic recognition technology... Also shooters need to wear a number on their jacket so they can be recognised. So if they are illegally shooting protected species, or inflicting cruelty, they can be identified."*

*"It is clear that it is almost impossible for us to gather sufficient evidence, even when it is blatant, the cruelty that is, that there should be a successful prosecution."*

- ◆ They felt hunters did not sufficiently engage with the GMA's education materials; and

*"People who need the messaging the most are those who don't really engage with organisations or GMA resources, hunters who have a licence but aren't associated with clubs."*

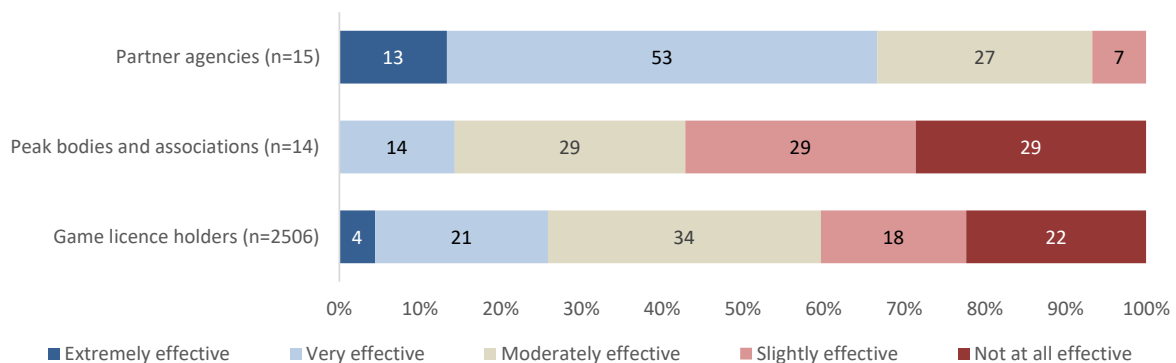
*"Enforcement comes into that as well, but the fact that there are present ways to reduce wounding (that is an education program that is being developed) but only a couple hundred people have undertaken it, because it is voluntary. It's been clearly available for 3-4 years but the number is not going up."*

- ◆ They had not seen any evidence that the GMA had made any impact in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices – these participants felt the GMA could communicate more about its achievements in this space (e.g. compliance activities being undertaken, education being used by hunters).

*"Feels like they maintain preserving status quo rather than progress so would be interesting to see how and what they have progressed on."*

Three fifths (60%) of game licence holders felt the GMA had been at least 'moderately' effective in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices. Those endorsed for deer only (68%) held the most positive perceptions, compared to those endorsed for game birds only (52%) or both (51%).

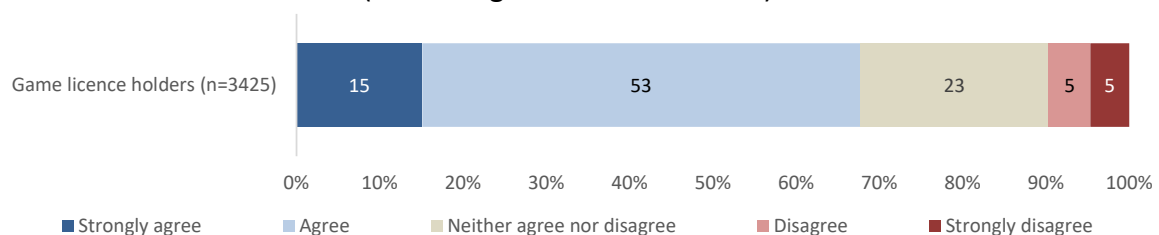
**Figure 44: GMA's impact in improving lawful and responsible hunting practices**  
(Base: All respondents)



Q14a/Q18a/Q23a. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at improving lawful and responsible hunting practices

The majority (68%) of game licence holders agreed the GMA's services assist them to be a lawful and responsible hunter. Those endorsed for deer only (77%) were most likely to agree, followed by those endorsed for both (60%) and game birds only (56%).

**Figure 45: Impact of the GMA in assisting hunters be lawful and responsible**  
(Base: All game licence holders)



Q22a. The GMA's services assist me to be a lawful and responsible hunter

## General comments

Respondents were invited to provide other comments or feedback on GMA's services that had not already been covered in the survey. Around one tenth (11%) of these comments contained positive sentiment, including general praise (e.g. keep up the good work), positive sentiments about GMA's resources/ information and staff, and appreciation of the free licence extension due to COVID-19. Negative comments and suggestions for improvement most frequently related to:

- ◆ Concerns about the length, restrictions and dates of seasons (in particular duck season) (21%);

*"The length and bag limits of the 2021 duck season were a very poor joke."*

*"The duck season this year did not seem to line up with the conditions i.e. lots of rain and ducks however, the season and bag limits did not seem to line up."*

- ◆ Listening to/ advocating for hunters more/ concerns that GMA is too biased towards protestors and animal welfare groups (20%);

*“GMA have to start treating hunters and their organisations as key stakeholders and not pander to the anti-hunting groups.”*

*“I believe there to be corruption at the top. Antis seem to have infiltrated the organisation and they do not have hunters interests at heart.”*

- ◆ Improving the transparency and use of science-based facts surrounding decision-making and advice/ perceptions that GMA is too politically motivated (19%) – the majority of these comments also related back to respondents’ concerns about the previous duck season;

*“Their communication and particularly taking any advice from long term experienced hunters is severely lacking. They say that their decisions are science based but do not provide the full background of that evidence.”*

*“In view of the last Victorian duck season it seemed the GMA was politically manipulated, and did not appear transparent in its collection of game bird numbers.”*

- ◆ More information/ Improved communication and clarity around rules and GMA’s roles/ better education for hunters (12%) – this included some comments about requiring clearer hunting maps, although hunting maps are not developed by the GMA; and

*“We need public education not just for hunters but the whole community, how to report illegal hunting, what ethical hunters can do for the environment and the table, the rules and laws that everyone should know around hunting, and hands on info, encouragement, and raffles or similar to engage and teach. Educate, educate, educate.”*

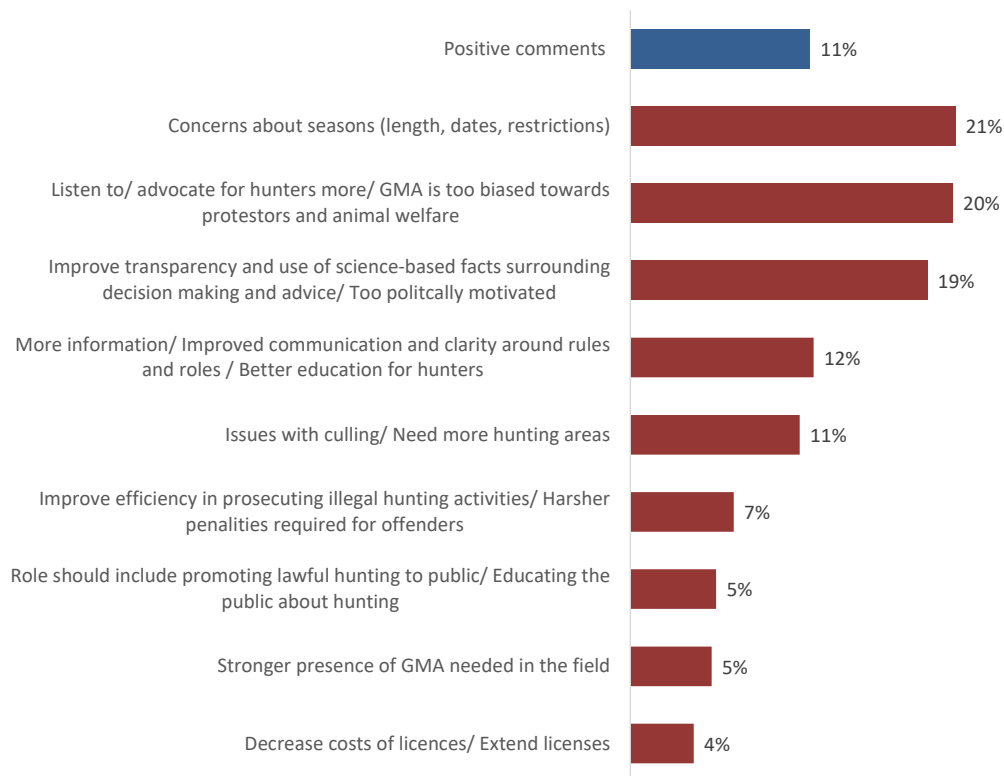
*“I would welcome more communication/ news about GMA and their activity in Victoria, perhaps by email newsletter, etc. I am not a big user of Facebook or other social media and would rather register to get regular updates.”*

- ◆ Concerns about deer control (including culling) / needing more hunting areas (11%) – many respondents perceived the use of culling to be wasteful and suggested the GMA utilise hunters for the control of game species. However, these concerns suggest deer control is an area of confusion around the GMA’s role among game licence holders, as deer control is not managed by the GMA.

*“Would like to see aerial culls stopped and more areas open to hunt. We take all meat home and use it.”*

*“I don’t feel I should be paying to hunt game animals while I pay taxes so government contractors can cull game animals from helicopters. A couple of hound crews would be more effective and would do it for free.”*

**Figure 46: Most frequent general comments provided**  
(Base: All game licence holders, n=1,267)



*Q25. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the GMA's services that have not already been covered in this survey?*



## XI. Conclusions and recommendations

The research found that there were clear differences among stakeholder groups in their perceptions of their engagement with the GMA and the GMA's performance. Overall, government partner agencies reported the most positive perceptions of the GMA, followed by peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting. Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting reported the least positive perceptions of the GMA.

Game licence holders reported broadly positive perceptions of the GMA overall. Among game licence holders, those endorsed to hunt deer only tended to provide more positive ratings than those endorsed to hunt game birds.

Given the differences observed among stakeholder groups, conclusions and recommendations for each are summarised separately below.

### Partner agencies

Overall, partner agencies had a good understanding of the GMA's role and were satisfied with their engagement. Partner agencies also reported positive perceptions of the GMA's performance in relation to its compliance activities, providing education resources to hunters and providing policy advice and research to government.

Despite high understanding of the GMA's role overall, many partner agencies felt there was scope to improve the delineation of the GMA's role and that of their own organisation where responsibilities overlapped or were unclear, particularly around policy and compliance activities. The GMA should consider how it can achieve this to avoid duplication and maximise efficiency in delivering relevant activities.

Other suggestions to improve engagement with partner agencies primarily related to improving *proactive* communication and collaboration. Specifically, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve information sharing with relevant partner agencies; and
  - Examples provided by partner agencies included: proactively forwarding documents of interest, providing regular updates on the GMA's activities and setting up regular formal catch ups;
- ◆ Increase transparency around the evidence and rationale for decisions/ policy advice made.

### Peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting

Overall, peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting demonstrated a good understanding of the GMA's roles and responsibilities. While most of those involved in hunting understood that promoting hunting was not part of the GMA's role, they felt that it should be part of the GMA's role so that it could more effectively achieve its objectives in improving sustainable,

lawful and responsible hunting. Many participants also reported their membership base believed part of the GMA's role was to promote hunting, which was linked to dissatisfaction and lower engagement with the GMA.

Peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting reported positive perceptions of the GMA's education resources, but many felt that the GMA could better engage hunters to utilise education materials. To improve performance in this area, the GMA should consider how it can encourage engagement with hunters (e.g. channels, social media).

While peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting reported positive perceptions of GMA staff they had engaged with, this cohort identified several areas for improvement primarily related to communication and consultation. Most feedback about the GMA's communication and consultation was in relation to duck season, as many participants did not perceive the decisions around duck season to have been made in line with scientific evidence.

To improve relationships with peak bodies/ associations involved in hunting, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve the quality/ credibility of data it uses and shares (and perceptions of this);
- ◆ Improve transparency in relation to providing evidence and rationale of why decisions had been made;
- ◆ Increase proactive communication about key issues and the GMA's activities more generally; and
- ◆ Offer better opportunities for genuine consultation with stakeholders in relation to key decisions.

## **Peak bodies/ associations opposed in hunting**

Overall, peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting demonstrated a good understanding of the GMA's roles and responsibilities. However, they reported some uncertainty about whether promoting hunting was part of the GMA's role, as they felt the GMA's communication and decisions made suggested that they were promoting hunting.

Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting generally felt the GMA was biased in favour of hunting and reported the least positive perceptions of nearly all aspects of engagement.

Peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting also reported the least positive perceptions of the GMA's performance in improving sustainable, lawful and responsible hunting practices, primarily led by perceptions the GMA's decisions were not made in line with scientific evidence and they had not observed any evidence that the GMA's activities had made an impact. In addition, many felt the GMA needed to increase engagement with education resources among game licence holders, including by mandating additional training.

Similar to those involved in hunting, to improve relationships with peak bodies/ associations opposed to hunting, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve the accuracy/ credibility of data it uses and shares (and perceptions of this);
- ◆ Improve transparency in relation to sharing of information and providing evidence/ rationale of why decisions had been made;
- ◆ Increase proactive communication about key issues, the activities the GMA is undertaking to promote sustainable and lawful hunting practices, and the impacts of these activities; and
- ◆ Offer better opportunities for genuine consultation with stakeholders in relation to key decisions.

## Game licence holders

Overall, game licence holders demonstrated a good understanding of the GMA's core roles and responsibilities but had some uncertainty about whether other responsibilities were part of the GMA's role – particularly promoting hunting of game species. Other stakeholder groups felt it was important for game licence holders to understand the GMA's role in order to build trust in the GMA and increase engagement with its resources, to ultimately encourage lawful and responsible hunting practices. To increase game licence holders' engagement with its resources, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Engage with game licence holders who are not part of hunting associations or clubs; and
- ◆ Improve game licence holders' understanding of its roles and responsibilities.

Those who had engaged with the GMA's services and education resources in the last 12 months generally reported positive perceptions of the services and resources used. To improve game licence holders' perceptions of its services and resources, the GMA should consider how it can:

- ◆ Improve the usability of its website/ online services –acknowledging that many hunters are from an older demographic; and
- ◆ Ensure information provided is consistent across its website, printed materials and advice provided by GMA staff.

## Appendix A: Performance measurement framework

Measures of success/ Performance Indicators	Questions in Stakeholder Questionnaires	Performance Scores (Note: 'Unsure/ not applicable' responses will be excluded)
<b>Goal: Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator</b> <b>Key result: Stakeholders and the broader community clearly understand our purpose and our role in contributing to sustainability and responsibility in game hunting</b>		
<b>MOS1. Stakeholders have a good understanding of the GMA's role</b>  <b>PI1.</b> Increase in stakeholders' understanding of the GMA's role	<b>For Partner Agencies, Peak Bodies and Game Licence Holders –</b>  Yes/No/Unsure selection (3 point scale: Yes (1), No (2), Unsure (3)) of the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Issuing firearms licences [False] (UND)</li> <li>○ Managing pest animal hunting [False] (UND)</li> <li>○ Managing game habitats [False] (UND)</li> <li>○ Managing public land where hunting is permitted [False] (UND)</li> <li>○ Promoting hunting of game species in Victoria [False] (UND)</li> <li>○ Providing advice to government on game management (UND)</li> <li>○ Providing education to hunters (UND)</li> <li>○ Enforcing compliance with game hunting laws (UND)</li> <li>○ Managing hunting seasons for game species</li> <li>○ Issuing game licences (UND)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Understanding index:</b> Index score = Average % correct responses * 100; Range [0,100].

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researching the impacts of game hunting/ game management (UND)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>MOS2. Stakeholders are satisfied with the GMA's provision of information and with their engagement experience</b></p> <p><b>PI2.1.</b> Increase in stakeholders' satisfaction with the GMA's provision of information and their engagement experience</p>	<p><b>For Partner Agencies and Peak Bodies –</b></p> <p>Overall satisfaction rating (5 point scale Very dissatisfied (1) to Very satisfied (5)) of the following item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with how GMA engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months? (ENG)</li> </ul> <p>Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GMA staff communicated with us effectively (ENG)</li> <li>GMA staff engaged with us in a professional manner (ENG)</li> <li>GMA provided information to our organisation in a timely manner (ENG)</li> <li>GMA provided our organisation with an adequate opportunity to provide it with information or feedback (ENG)</li> <li>GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues (ENG – Partner Agencies only)</li> <li>GMA provided sufficient information to our organisation (ENG – Peak Bodies only)</li> <li>GMA worked with us in a collaborative manner (ENG)</li> <li>GMA staff engaged with us in an open and transparent manner (ENG)</li> <li>The GMA was committed to finding solutions to problems (ENG)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engagement index:</b> Index score = <u>Weighted</u>* average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: [(average overall satisfaction) minus 1] x 6 + [(average of the question labelled ENG) minus 1] x 17.5; Range [0,100]</p> <p>*Higher weight assigned to Overall Satisfaction question (30%)</p>

<p><b>PI2.2.</b> Increase in game licence holders' satisfaction with the GMA's provision of information and their engagement experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a clear delineation of responsibilities between the GMA and my organisation (ENG)</li> </ul> <p><b>For Partner Agencies</b> – Effectiveness rating (5 point scale: not at all effective (1) to extremely effective (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supporting partner agencies to make decisions (ENG)</li> <li>○ Providing information to and collaborating with its partners (ENG)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>For Game Licence Holders</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information provided by the GMA was clear and easy to understand (CENG)</li> <li>• GMA staff engaged with you in a professional manner (CENG)</li> <li>• GMA staff engaged with you in a helpful manner (CENG)</li> <li>• GMA addressed your request/ submission in a timely manner (CENG)</li> <li>• GMA's response adequately addressed your request/ submission (CENG)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community Engagement index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: [(average of the question labelled CENG) minus 1] x 25; Range [0,100]</p>
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<p><b>PI2.3.</b> Increase in game licence holders' satisfaction with their interactions with GMA Game Officers</p>	<p><b>For Game Licence Holders</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game Officer(s) were helpful (OFFI)</li> <li>• Game Officer(s) engaged with you in a respectful manner (OFFI)</li> <li>• Game Officer(s) were knowledgeable (OFFI)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Officer index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: [(average of the question labelled OFFI) minus 1] x 25; Range [0,100]</p>
<p><b>MOS3. Stakeholders support the GMA's compliance activities</b></p> <p><b>PI3.</b> Increase in stakeholders' perceived effectiveness of the GMA's compliance activities</p>	<p><b>For Partner Agencies and Peak Bodies</b> – Effectiveness rating (5 point scale: not at all effective (1) to extremely effective (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Undertaking a coordinated approach to compliance operations (COMP) [Partner Agencies only]</li> <li>○ Delivering effective compliance operations (COMP) [Peak Bodies only]</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>For all Game Licence Holders</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GMA is adequately addressing illegal hunting (COMP)</li> <li>• The GMA adequately addresses breaches to public safety laws related to hunting (COMP)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Compliance index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: [(average of the question labelled COMP) minus 1] x 25; Range [0,100]</p> <p>Please note the components of the compliance index comprise different questions for partner agencies and peak bodies/ associations compared to game licence holders, hence the index scores are not directly comparable.</p>





<p><b>PI4.3.</b> Increase in partner agencies' agreement that the GMA demonstrates a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues</p> <p><b>PI4.4.</b> Increase in partner agencies' agreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities</p>	<p><b>For Partner Agencies</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues</li> </ul> <p><b>For Partner Agencies, Peak Bodies and Game Licence Holders</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p>% of partner agencies who agree the GMA staff demonstrated a high level of capability in addressing regulatory and legislative issues</p> <p>% of partner agencies who agree the GMA is neutral and unbiased in delivering its responsibilities</p>
<p><b>Goal: Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of the GMA's work</b></p> <p><b>Key result: Hunter compliance and behaviour is improved through education programs based on evidence and an understanding of motivations, behaviours and capabilities</b></p>		
<p><b>MOS5. Apply a strategic approach to delivering targeted and relevant education to hunters and stakeholders</b></p> <p><b>PI5.1.</b> Increase in stakeholders' satisfaction with the GMA's education resources</p>	<p><b>For Peak Bodies and Game Licence Holders</b> – Agreement rating (5 point scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking about the GMA resources you have used or events you have attended in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the information provided was...             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to access (EDU)</li> <li>Easy to understand (EDU)</li> <li>Helpful/ useful (EDU)</li> <li>Accurate (EDU)</li> <li>Objective, fair and balanced (EDU)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Education index:</b> Index score = Average across survey respondents of their individual index measures: [(average of the question items labelled EDU) minus 1] x 25; Range [0,100]</p> <p>Please note the education index for partner agencies is not directly comparable with peak bodies/ associations and game licence holders, as partner agencies were not asked the same question set about education resources.</p>

<p><b>PI5.2.</b> Increase usage of the GMA's education resources among hunters</p>	<p><b>For Partner Agencies and Peak Bodies</b> – Effectiveness rating (5 point scale: not at all effective (1) to extremely effective (5)) of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing quality education to game hunters (EDU)</li> <li>○ Providing the Victorian community with access to reliable and relevant information about game management (EDU) [Peak Bodies only]</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>For Game Licence Holders</b> – Used at least education resource in last 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Game hunting in Victoria manual</li> <li>○ Factsheets</li> <li>○ Gamebird tools and resources (e.g. Duck WISE education video, Waterfowl Identification Test)</li> <li>○ Deer hunting tools and resources (e.g. guide to use of hounds when hunting sambar deer)</li> <li>○ Game species research (e.g. harvest reports, population estimates)</li> <li>○ Hunting research (e.g. licensing statistics, hunters' knowledge survey, aerial survey of game ducks)</li> <li>○ Laws, policies and strategies</li> <li>○ Firearms safety resources (i.e. Firearms safety videos)</li> <li>○ GMA education event/ marquee/ event stand</li> <li>○ More to Explore App/ online hunting maps</li> <li>○ Other</li> </ul>	<p>% of game licence holders who used at least one of the GMA's education resources in last 12 months</p>
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## **Appendix B: Survey questionnaires**

Three questionnaires were developed, one for each stakeholder group:

- Partner agencies
- Other industry stakeholders, hunting organisations and peak bodies
- Game licence holders

# **Victorian Game Management Authority**

## **Stakeholder sentiment research Partner agency survey**

**July 2021**

FINAL

## A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this stakeholder research.

The purpose of the survey is to help the Victorian Game Management Authority (GMA) understand your experiences working with the GMA, and your perceptions of its performance as a regulator and provider of advice to government. Your feedback will help the GMA to identify opportunities for improvement in how it engages, communicates and works with you.

To ensure objectivity in the collection and analysis of responses, an independent market and social research firm, ORIMA Research, has been engaged by the GMA to conduct the research. ORIMA will treat all your responses, comments and information as strictly confidential. Your email contact details were provided to ORIMA by the GMA solely for the purposes of this survey.

The survey should take around 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

In order to maximise the opportunity for the GMA to improve how it works with your organisation, the GMA would appreciate receiving your completed questionnaire, including your organisation's name. If you would prefer not to be identified, please indicate this in the section at the end of the questionnaire and your response will only be provided anonymously to the GMA.

Participation in this research is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question. You can decide to stop at any time. Your answers will only be used for the purposes of the research.

## B. Understanding of the GMA's role

1. What do you think the Game Management Authority's main role(s) is in Victoria?

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2. Overall, how confident are you in your understanding of the GMA's role?

Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	Don't know/ can't say
1	2	3	4	5	6

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SHOW Q3 ON SEPARATE PAGE TO QError! Reference source not found.-2

3. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.

[Randomise]	Yes	No	Unsure
a) Issuing firearms licences [False]	1	2	3
b) Managing pest animal hunting [False]	1	2	3

c) Managing game habitats [False]	1	2	3
d) Managing public land where game hunting is permitted [False]	1	2	3
e) Promoting hunting of game species in Victoria [False]	1	2	3
f) Providing advice to government on game management	1	2	3
g) Providing education to hunters	1	2	3
h) Enforcing compliance with game hunting laws	1	2	3
i) Managing hunting seasons for game species	1	2	3
j) Issuing game licences	1	2	3
k) Researching the impacts of game hunting/ game management	1	2	3

## C. Engagement with GMA

4. How would you describe your organisation's dealings with the GMA in the past 12 months?
- 1 Have not engaged with the GMA or its resources at all [Go to next section]
  - 2 Have provided customer services for the GMA [Go to Q6]
  - 3 Have not engaged with the GMA directly, but have accessed its resources [Go to next section]
  - 4 Have engaged directly with the GMA occasionally
  - 5 Have engaged directly with the GMA often
  - 6 Unsure
5. Which of the following types of dealings have you had with the GMA over the past 12 months? [Please select as many options as apply]
- 1 Consulting on policy development
  - 2 Consulting on operational plans or procedures
  - 3 Engaging on specific legal cases/ matters
  - 4 Consulting on game hunting related policy matters
  - 5 Consulting on program or service delivery
  - 6 Obtaining advice on compliance matters
  - 7 Collaborating on the development or dissemination of education materials / resources
  - 8 Other [Please specify \_\_\_\_\_]

6. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with how GMA engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months?

- 1 Very dissatisfied
- 2 Dissatisfied
- 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 Satisfied
- 5 Very satisfied
- 6 Unsure

7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure/ Not applicable
a) GMA staff communicated with us <u>effectively</u> (e.g. were open, accessible, responsive)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) GMA staff engaged with us in a <u>professional</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA provided information to our organisation in a <u>timely</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The GMA provided our organisation with an adequate opportunity to <u>provide it with information or feedback</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) The GMA provided <u>sufficient</u> information to our organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) GMA staff demonstrated a <u>high level of capability</u> in addressing regulatory and legislative issues	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) The GMA worked with us in a <u>collaborative</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) There was a <u>clear delineation of responsibilities</u> between the GMA and my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6
i) GMA staff engaged with us in an <u>open</u> and <u>transparent</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
j) The GMA was committed to <u>finding solutions</u> to problems	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement about how the GMA engages with you? In particular, if you disagreed with any of the statements above, please explain why.

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9. Do you have any comments or suggestions about how your work can further support the work of the GMA?

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## D. GMA Activities

10. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	Unsure
a) Undertaking a coordinated approach to compliance operations	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Supporting partner agencies to make decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Providing quality education to game hunters	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) Providing information to and collaborating with its partners	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Managing game seasons in line with scientific advice / evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6

11. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's policy advice and research.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) The GMA provides <u>timely</u> policy advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The GMA provides policy advice supported by the <u>best available evidence</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA demonstrates a high level of <u>expertise</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6



in the game hunting regulation space						
d) The GMA <u>adequately consults</u> with stakeholders/ partner agencies to inform policy development	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) The GMA is <u>objective, balanced and fair</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) The GMA provides <u>trustworthy</u> policy advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) The GMA provides <u>consistent</u> advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) Policy advice is made with <u>appropriate consideration</u> of economic, social and environmental factors	1	2	3	4	5	6

12. Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement about how the GMA undertakes these activities? In particular, if you provided any lower rating(s) please explain why.

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## E. Impacts of GMA Activities

13. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
1	2	3	4	5	6

14. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	Unsure
a) Improving lawful and responsible hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Improving sustainable hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6

15. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in:

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Declined a lot	Declined slightly	Remained the same	Improved slightly	Improved a lot	Unsure
a) Providing science-based evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Communicating what you need to know / useful information	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The quality of licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The ease of understanding licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Its presence in the field	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) Deterring illegal activity	1	2	3	4	5	6

## F. About you

16. Which of the following best describes the position you hold in your organisation?

- 1 Senior executive / commissioner
- 2 Director / assistant director / commander
- 3 Senior manager / manager / superintendent
- 4 Program manager
- 5 Policy advisor / officer
- 6 Other [Please specify \_\_\_\_\_]

## G. General comments

17. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the GMA's services that have not already been covered in this survey?

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To maximise the value of this survey in terms of its ability to assist the GMA to improve how it engages with your organisation, the GMA would like to obtain a copy of your completed

questionnaire, including your organisation's name.

However, the GMA recognises that some respondents may prefer not to be identified. If you do not consent to including your organisation's name with your response, your response will only be provided anonymously to the GMA.

18. Do you consent to ORIMA providing your completed questionnaire to the GMA with your organisation identified?

1 Yes

2 No

## H. Thank you

**Thank you for your participation in the survey.**

**Your assistance is very much appreciated.**

You can return to the survey and modify your responses, if necessary, by accessing the survey link again and entering the unique password provided to you at the start of the survey.

This survey is being carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), including the Information Privacy Principles specified therein. The information you have provided will be used only for research purposes.

ORIMA Research will not disclose any identifiable research information for a purpose other than conducting our research or to overseas recipients unless we have your express prior consent or are required to do so by an Australian law.

Our Privacy Policy is available at [www.orima.com](http://www.orima.com) and contains further details regarding how you can access or correct information we hold about you, how you can make a privacy related complaint and how that complaint will be dealt with. Should you have any questions about our privacy policy or how we will treat your information, you may contact our Privacy Officer, Liesel van Straaten on (03) 9526 9000.

Until we de-identify our research records, you have the right to access the information that we hold about you as a result of this survey. You may request at any time to have this information de-identified or destroyed.

Thank you for your time. If you have any queries about this survey, or would like any further information, you can call us on 1800 654 585.

# **Victorian Game Management Authority**

## **Stakeholder sentiment research Industry stakeholders, hunting organisations and peak bodies survey**

**July 2021**

FINAL

## A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this stakeholder research.

The purpose of the survey is to help the Victorian Game Management Authority (GMA) understand your experiences working with the GMA, and your perceptions of its performance as a regulator and provider of advice to government. Your feedback will help the GMA to identify opportunities for improvement in how it engages, communicates and works with you.

To ensure objectivity in the collection and analysis of responses, an independent market and social research firm, ORIMA Research, has been engaged by the GMA to conduct the research. ORIMA will treat all your responses, comments and information as strictly confidential. Your email contact details were provided to ORIMA by the GMA solely for the purposes of this survey.

The survey should take around 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

In order to maximise the opportunity for the GMA to improve how it works with your organisation, the GMA would appreciate receiving your completed questionnaire, including your organisation's name. If you would prefer not to be identified, please indicate this in the section at the end of the questionnaire and your response will only be provided anonymously to the GMA.

Participation in this research is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question. You can decide to stop at any time. Your answers will only be used for the purposes of the research.

## B. Understanding of the GMA's role

1. What do you think the Game Management Authority's main role(s) is in Victoria?

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2. Overall, how confident are you in your understanding of the GMA's role?

Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	Don't know/ can't say
1	2	3	4	5	6

SHOW Q3 ON SEPARATE PAGE TO QError! Reference source not found.-2

3. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.

[Randomise]	Yes	No	Unsure
a) Issuing firearms licences [False]	1	2	3
b) Managing pest animal hunting [False]	1	2	3

c) Managing game habitats [False]	1	2	3
d) Managing public land where hunting is permitted [False]	1	2	3
e) Promoting hunting of game species in Victoria [False]	1	2	3
f) Providing advice to government on game management	1	2	3
g) Providing education to hunters	1	2	3
h) Enforcing compliance with game hunting laws	1	2	3
i) Managing hunting seasons for game species	1	2	3
j) Issuing game licences	1	2	3
k) Researching the impacts of game hunting/ game management	1	2	3

## C. Engagement with GMA

4. How would you describe your organisation's dealings with the GMA in the past 12 months?
- 1 Have not engaged with the GMA or its resources at all [\[Go to next section\]](#)
  - 2 Have not engaged with the GMA directly, but have accessed its resources [\[Go to next section\]](#)
  - 3 Have engaged directly with the GMA occasionally
  - 4 Have engaged directly with the GMA often
  - 5 Unsure
5. Which of the following types of dealings have you had with the GMA over the past 12 months? [\[Please select as many options as apply\]](#)
- 1 Consulting on policy development
  - 2 Consulting on operational plans or procedures
  - 3 Engaging on specific legal cases / matters
  - 4 Consulting on game hunting-related policy matters
  - 5 Consulting on program or service delivery
  - 6 Obtaining advice on compliance matters
  - 7 Collaborating on the development or dissemination of education materials / resources
  - 8 Other [\[Please specify\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_\]](#)

6. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with how the GMA engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months?

- 1 Very dissatisfied
- 2 Dissatisfied
- 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 Satisfied
- 5 Very satisfied
- 6 Unsure

7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA in relation to how it has engaged with your organisation over the past 12 months.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure/ Not Applicable
a) GMA staff communicated with us <u>effectively</u> (e.g. were open, accessible, responsive)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) GMA staff engaged with us in a <u>professional</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA provided information to our organisation in a <u>timely</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The GMA provided our organisation with an adequate opportunity to <u>provide it with information or feedback</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) The GMA provided <u>sufficient information</u> to our organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) The GMA worked with us in a <u>collaborative</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) GMA staff engaged with us in an <u>open and transparent</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) The GMA was committed to <u>finding solutions</u> to problems	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement about how the GMA engages with you? In particular, if you disagreed with any of the statements above, please explain why.

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9. Do you have any comments or suggestions about how your work can support the work of the GMA?

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## D. Education

10. Have you accessed/ used any of the following education resources from the GMA in the past 12 months? [Multiple response] [Randomise]

- 1 Game hunting in Victoria manual
- 2 Factsheets
- 3 Gamebird tools and resources (e.g. Duck WISE education video, Waterfowl Identification Test)
- 4 Deer hunting tools and resources (e.g. guide to use of hounds when hunting sambar deer)
- 5 Game species research (e.g. harvest reports, population estimates)
- 6 Hunting research (e.g. licensing statistics, hunters' knowledge survey, aerial monitoring survey)
- 7 Laws, policies and strategies
- 8 Firearms safety resources (i.e. Firearms safety videos)
- 9 GMA education event/ marquee/ event stand
- 10 Other [Please specify]
- 11 None of the above [Go to Q13]

11. Where did you access/ obtain the GMA's education resources? [Multiple response] [Do not randomise]

- 1 Game Management Authority website ([www.gma.vic.gov.au](http://www.gma.vic.gov.au))
- 2 GMA Facebook
- 3 GMA YouTube
- 4 Hunting association/ club website
- 5 Online from another website
- 6 GMA education event/ marquee/ event stand
- 7 Event hosted by another organisation that GMA staff attended (e.g. Club meeting, hound registration day)
- 8 GMA testing facility



- 9 Hunting/ firearms retail store
- 10 Other *[Please specify]*
- 11 Can't recall

12. Thinking about the GMA education resources you have used or events you have attended in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the information provided was...

<b>[Randomise Single response for each statement]</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure/ Not applicable</b>
a) Easy to find	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Helpful / useful	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) Accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Objective, fair and balanced	1	2	3	4	5	6

13. Do you have any feedback on the GMA's education resources, or suggestions for information or resources you think the GMA should provide more of?

## E. GMA Activities

14. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

<b>[Randomise Single response for each statement]</b>	<b>Not at all effective</b>	<b>Slightly effective</b>	<b>Moderately effective</b>	<b>Very effective</b>	<b>Extremely effective</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
a) Delivering effective compliance operations	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Providing quality education to game hunters	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Providing recommendations on game seasons in line with scientific advice / evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) Providing the Victorian community with access to reliable and relevant	1	2	3	4	5	6

information about game hunting	
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15. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's advice and research.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) The GMA provides <u>timely</u> advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The GMA provides advice and recommendations supported by the <u>best available evidence</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA demonstrates a high level of <u>expertise</u> in the game hunting regulation space	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The GMA <u>adequately consults</u> with stakeholders/ peak bodies	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) The GMA is <u>objective, balanced and fair</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) The GMA provides <u>trustworthy</u> advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) The GMA provides <u>consistent</u> advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) Advice is made with <u>appropriate consideration</u> of economic, social and environmental factors	1	2	3	4	5	6

16. Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement about how the GMA undertakes these activities? In particular, if you provided any lower rating(s) please explain why.

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## F. Overall perceptions

17. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
1	2	3	4	5	6

18. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	Unsure
a) Improving lawful and responsible hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Improving sustainable hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6

19. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in:

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Declined a lot	Declined slightly	Remained the same	Improved slightly	Improved a lot	Unsure
a) Providing science-based evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Communicating what you need to know / useful information	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The quality of licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The ease of understanding licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Its presence in the field	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) Deterring illegal activity	1	2	3	4	5	6

## G. About you

20. Which of the following best describes the position you hold in your organisation?

- 1 Senior executive
- 2 President / Chair
- 3 Director
- 4 Area manager
- 5 Program manager
- 6 Other [Please specify\_\_\_\_\_]

## H. General comments

21. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the GMA's services that have not already been covered in this survey?

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To maximise the value of this survey in terms of its ability to assist the GMA to improve how it engages with your organisation, the GMA would like to obtain a copy of your completed questionnaire, including your organisation's name.

However, the GMA recognises that some respondents may prefer not to be identified. If you do not consent to including your organisation's name with your response, your response will only be provided anonymously to the GMA.

22. Do you consent to ORIMA providing your completed questionnaire to the GMA with your organisation identified?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

## I. Thank you

**Thank you for your participation in the survey.**

**Your assistance is very much appreciated.**

You can return to the survey and modify your responses, if necessary, by accessing the survey link again and entering the unique password provided to you at the start of the survey.

This survey is being carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), including the Information Privacy Principles specified therein. The information you have provided will be used only for research purposes.

ORIMA Research will not disclose any identifiable research information for a purpose other than conducting our research or to overseas recipients unless we have your express prior consent or are required to do so by an Australian law.

Our Privacy Policy is available at [www.orima.com](http://www.orima.com) and contains further details regarding how you can access or correct information we hold about you, how you can make a privacy related complaint and how that complaint will be dealt with. Should you have any questions about our privacy policy or how we will treat your information, you may contact our Privacy Officer, Liesel van Straaten on (03) 9526 9000.

Until we de-identify our research records, you have the right to access the information that we hold about you as a result of this survey. You may request at any time to have this information de-identified or destroyed.

Thank you for your time. If you have any queries about this survey, or would like any further information, you can call us on 1800 654 585.

# **Victorian Game Management Authority**

## **Stakeholder sentiment research Game licence holder survey**

**July 2021**

FINAL

## A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this stakeholder research.

The purpose of the survey is to help the Victorian Game Management Authority (GMA) understand your perceptions of the GMA, and your experiences using its services. Your feedback will help the GMA to identify opportunities for improvement in how it engages and communicates with game licence holders like yourself.

To ensure objectivity in the collection and analysis of responses, an independent market and social research firm, ORIMA Research, has been engaged by the GMA to conduct the research. ORIMA will treat all your responses, comments and information as strictly confidential. No individual will be able to be identified from the research. Your email contact details were provided to ORIMA by the GMA solely for the purposes of this survey.

The survey should take around 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Participation in this research is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question. You can decide to stop at any time. Your answers will only be used for the purposes of the research.

## B. Understanding of the GMA's role

- Before today, were you aware or not aware of the Victorian Game Management Authority (GMA)?

- 1 Aware
- 2 Not aware

- What do you think the Game Management Authority's main role(s) is in Victoria?

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- Overall, how confident are you in your understanding of the GMA's role?

Not confident at all	Not very confident	Moderately confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	Don't know/ can't say
1	2	3	4	5	6

## SHOW Q4 ON SEPARATE PAGE TO Q1-3

4. Please indicate whether you think each of the following are part of the GMA's role.

[Randomise]	Yes	No	Unsure
a) Issuing firearms licences [False]	1	2	3
b) Managing pest animal hunting [False]	1	2	3
c) Managing game habitats [False]	1	2	3
d) Managing public land where hunting is permitted [False]	1	2	3
e) Promoting the hunting of game species in Victoria [False]	1	2	3
f) Providing advice to government on game management	1	2	3
g) Providing education to hunters	1	2	3
h) Enforcing compliance with game hunting laws	1	2	3
i) Managing hunting seasons for game species	1	2	3
j) Issuing game licences	1	2	3
k) Researching the impacts of game hunting/ game management	1	2	3

[Thank and end if Q1=2 i.e. not previously aware of the GMA:

Thank you for answering these initial questions. As you indicated you were not aware of the Victorian Game Management Authority, the remaining questions in this survey are not applicable to you. Thanks again for your participation.]

## C. GMA's services

5. Which of the GMA's services have you used in the past 12 months? [Multiple response] [Do not randomise]

- 1 Applied for game licence
- 2 Renewed game licence
- 3 Amended game licence (e.g. change of address)
- 4 Applied for Hog Deer tags
- 5 Registered or transferred a hound
- 6 Reported illegal hunting



- 7 Sought authorisation to undertake an activity (e.g. research permit, added an endorsement to hunt game species to my licence, commercial licence)
- 8 Requested information from the GMA (e.g. through their website contact form, email, social media or Customer Service Centre)
- 9 Other *[Please specify]*
- 10 None of the above *[Go to Q8]*

6. Thinking about your interactions with the GMA in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

<b>[Randomise Single response for each statement]</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure/ Not applicable</b>
a) Information provided by the GMA was <u>clear and easy to understand</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The GMA addressed your request/ submission in a <u>timely</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA's response adequately addressed your request/ submission <i>[ONLY ASK IF Q5=6-8]</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) GMA staff engaged with you in a <u>professional</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) GMA staff engaged with you in a <u>helpful</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. Do you have any feedback on your interactions with the GMA in the past 12 months? In particular, if you disagreed with any of the statements above, please explain why.

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8. Excluding this survey, has the GMA requested your feedback (e.g. annual harvest survey, hunter knowledge survey) in the past 12 months?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No *[Go to Q11]*

9. Did you respond to this request for feedback?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

10. Thinking about when the GMA has requested your feedback, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

<b>[Do <u>not</u> randomise Single response for each statement]</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure/ Not applicable</b>
a) An <u>appropriate method</u> was used for collecting this feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The purpose for requesting feedback from you was <u>clear</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6

## D. Education

11. Have you accessed/ used any of the following education resources from the GMA in the past 12 months? **[Multiple response]** **[Randomise]**

- 1 Game hunting in Victoria manual
- 2 Factsheets
- 3 Gamebird tools and resources (e.g. Duck WISE education video, Waterfowl Identification Test)
- 4 Deer hunting tools and resources (e.g. guide to use of hounds when hunting sambar deer)
- 5 Game species research (e.g. harvest reports, population estimates)
- 6 Hunting research (e.g. licensing statistics, hunters' knowledge survey, aerial survey of game ducks)
- 7 Laws, policies and strategies
- 8 Firearms safety resources (i.e. Firearms safety videos)
- 9 GMA education event/ marquee/ event stand
- 10 Other **[Please specify]**
- 11 None of the above **[Go to Q14]**

12. Where did you access/ obtain the GMA's education resources? **[Multiple response]** **[Do not randomise]**

- 1 Game Management Authority website ([www.gma.vic.gov.au](http://www.gma.vic.gov.au))
- 2 GMA Facebook
- 3 GMA YouTube
- 4 Hunting association/ club website
- 5 Online from another website
- 6 GMA education event/ marquee/ event stand

- 7 Event hosted by another organisation that GMA staff attended (e.g. Club meeting, hound registration day)
- 8 GMA testing facility (where you completed your test to obtain game licence)
- 9 Hunting / firearms retail store
- 10 Other *[Please specify]*
- 11 Can't recall

13. Thinking about the GMA education resources you have used or events you have attended in the past 12 months, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement that the information provided was...

<b>[Randomise Single response for each statement]</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure/ Not applicable</b>
a) Easy to find	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Helpful / useful	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) Accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Objective, fair and balanced	1	2	3	4	5	6

14. Do you have any feedback on the GMA's education resources, or suggestions for information or resources you think the GMA should provide more of?

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## E. GMA Game Officers

15. Have you interacted with any GMA Game Officers while hunting/ in the field over the past 12 months?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No *[Go to next section]*
- 3 Unsure *[Go to next section]*

16. Please describe this interaction.

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17. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your interactions with GMA Game Officers over the past 12 months.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) Game Officer(s) were <u>helpful</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Game Officer(s) were <u>knowledgeable</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Game Officer(s) engaged with you in a <u>respectful</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6

## F. Enforcement

18. Have you been investigated by the GMA for a hunting offence in the past 12 months?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [Go to Q20]
- 3 Prefer not to say [Go to Q20]

19. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your interactions with GMA staff during the investigation(s).

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) GMA staff engaged with you in a <u>professional</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) GMA staff engaged with you in a <u>respectful</u> manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA was <u>transparent</u> in its decision making	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The GMA was <u>fair</u> in its decision making	1	2	3	4	5	6

20. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA's enforcement activities.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) The GMA is adequately addressing illegal hunting	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The GMA adequately addresses breaches to public safety laws related to hunting	1	2	3	4	5	6

21. Do you have any comments about the GMA's enforcement activities? In particular, if you provided any lower rating(s) please explain what areas you feel are not being addressed.

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## G. Overall perceptions

22. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the GMA.

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
a) The GMA's services assist me to be a lawful and responsible hunter	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) The GMA is neutral and unbiased (i.e. not for or against hunting) in delivering its responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The GMA is transparent in its decision making	1	2	3	4	5	6

23. Over the past 12 months, how effective would you say that the GMA has been at...

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	Unsure
a) Improving lawful and responsible hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Improving sustainable hunting practices	1	2	3	4	5	6

24. In the last four years, how do you think the GMA's performance has changed in:

[Randomise Single response for each statement]	Declined a lot	Declined slightly	Remained the same	Improved slightly	Improved a lot	Unsure
a) Providing science-based evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Communicating what you need to know / useful information	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) The quality of licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) The ease of understanding licensing and education materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Its presence in the field	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) Deterring illegal activity	1	2	3	4	5	6

## H. General comments

25. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the GMA's services that have not already been covered in this survey?

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## I. Demographics

These final few questions are about you, to help us analyse the results from the survey.

26. What category/ies of game is your Game Licence endorsed for? [Multiple response]

- 1 Deer
- 2 Deer with hounds
- 3 Duck
- 4 Stubble Quail
- 5 Introduced gamebirds

27. Are you a member of a hunting association or club?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

28. What is your postcode? [Allow numeric only, limit to four characters]

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29. What is your gender?

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Self-describe
- 4 Prefer not to say

30. What is your age?

- 1 Less than 18 years old
- 2 18-24
- 3 25-34
- 4 35-44
- 5 45-54
- 6 55-64
- 7 65-74
- 8 75-84
- 9 85 or over
- 10 Prefer not to say

## J. Thank you

**Thank you for your participation in the survey.**

**Your assistance is very much appreciated.**

You can return to the survey and modify your responses, if necessary, by accessing the survey link again and entering the unique password provided to you at the start of the survey.

This survey is being carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), including the Information Privacy Principles specified therein. The information you have provided will be used only for research purposes.

ORIMA Research will not disclose any identifiable research information for a purpose other than conducting our research or to overseas recipients unless we have your express prior consent or are required to do so by an Australian law.

Our Privacy Policy is available at [www.orima.com](http://www.orima.com) and contains further details regarding how you can access or correct information we hold about you, how you can make a privacy related complaint and how that complaint will be dealt with. Should you have any questions about our privacy policy or how we will treat your information, you may contact our Privacy Officer, Liesel van Straaten on (03) 9526 9000.

Until we de-identify our research records, you have the right to access the information that we hold about you as a result of this survey. You may request at any time to have this information de-identified or destroyed.

Thank you for your time. If you have any queries about this survey, or would like any further information, you can call us on 1800 654 585.



## Appendix C: Qualitative research participants

A list of participants in the qualitative follow up interviews is provided below.

Participant name	Organisation
Glenys Oogjes, Louise Bonomi	Animals Australia
Peter Menkhorst	Arthur Rylah Institute
Barry Howlett	Australian Deer Association
Laurie Levy	Coalition Against Duck Shooting
Kate Gavens	DELWP
Louise Thompson	DELWP
Richard Wadsworth	DELWP
Pierre Harcourt	DJPR
Susanna French	DJPR
Dean O'Hara	Field and Game
Glenn Falla	Field and Game
Scott McDonald	Para Park Cooperative (Sunday Island)
Liz Walker, Rebecca Cook, Clare Brealey	RSPCA
Colin Wood	Shooting Sports Council of Victoria
David Laird	SSAA
Andrea Mapp	VGSO
Deon Kriek	VicForests
Trevor Nicklen	VicForests
Geoff Maggs	Victorian Hound Hunters' Inc.

Please note one participant in the qualitative research is unable to disclosed.